

**Expert Advisory Committee for the Reform of Indigenous Services Canada**

**Summary Report of Activities, Observations and Advice**

**Spring 2022 to Spring 2024**

## **A. Introduction**

The Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) was jointly envisioned by the parties to 2016 CHRT 2 and affirmed by a consent order and decision by the Tribunal (2022 CHRT 8) issued in March 2022. The first meeting of the EAC and the parties occurred in late April 2022. The core members include Alanis Obomsawin, Amber DVA Johnson, Carol Hopkins, Kevin Page, Larry Bremner, Naiomi Metallic, Raven Sinclair and Rod McCormick. In January 2024, the EAC welcomed one new youth member, Cedar Iahtail.

The EAC believes that it is important to create reports that not only record our journey but also provide our observations and advice to Canada and the other parties. This report will cover the last two years, but we will endeavour to provide such reports more regularly.

## **B. Mandate**

The wording of the consent order creating the EAC speaks to our role in helping the parties “develop and oversee the implementation of an evidence-informed work plan to prevent the recurrence of discrimination.” In the Agreement-in-Principle on Long-Term Reform the parties specifically identified that the EAC would provide advice and guidance on the design and implementation of an independent third-party evaluation to support the reform of ISC.

The decision by the CHRT approving the consent order (2022 CHRT 8) clearly shows that the parties had a variety of perspectives on how the EAC could assist the parties in preventing the recurrence of discrimination (e.g., what would be part of the “work plan”) and the Tribunal appears to endorse all of these as reasonable potential functions of the EAC (see paras 87 to 104). Supporting a third-party evaluation was one function identified by the parties (Canada in particular), but it certainly was not the only one.

Based on the CHRT decision, we see our function ultimately as providing advice to the parties on the issues they bring to us about preventing the recurrence of discrimination found by CHRT in 2016 CHRT 2 and subsequent decisions and orders.

## **C. Summary of Activities**

To date, the EAC has participated in twelve formal meetings with ISC and the co-parties including representatives from the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society (Caring Society), Assembly of First Nations (AFN), and interested parties including Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN). The main parties with which the EAC has interacted over the last two years have been Canada and the Caring Society.

Early on (May 2022), a subcommittee of EAC members was formed to review and provide commentary on proposed Terms of Reference (“TOR”). Comments were provided, though there were delays in finalizing the TOR and it has yet to be finalized. In the summer of 2023, EAC members suggested changes to the TOR (discussed further below), which are now the subject of some disagreement between some of the parties and the EAC.

For roughly the first 16 months since its inception (until the summer of 2023), the work of the EAC was largely focused on working with consultants from the Universities of Ottawa and Victoria, hired by ISC, to author a report intended as a literature review and context-setting piece to eventually assist and inform the work of the Third-Party evaluators ('the Monograph'). A couple of EAC working groups were struck to assist the consultants in their work.

At various formal EAC meetings with the parties, the EAC also received presentations from ISC staff about different cultural competency and trainings offered to ISC staff. At times, in relation to these presentations, EAC members expressed confusion about the different courses and how the trainings offered fit cohesively together. Concerns were also raised that the content did not sufficiently address the discrimination found by the CHRT or focus on fixing the 'old mindset.' Additional information was sometimes requested by members, but not always forthcoming. The EAC has also suggested the creation of a sub-committee of the EAC to examine and provide advice on ISC's training more systematically.

At times, representatives from the Caring Society raised issues of continuing discrimination in relation to Jordan's Principles and other essential services programming linked to child and family services that needed urgent attention. In response, EAC members would request more information from the parties to better understand these issues in order to provide better informed advice.

In June 2023, on the EAC's prompting, a meeting was held with the EAC and Senior Managers within ISC. The conversation focused on lessons learned from the CHRT ruling, as well as how the EAC could support ISC in preventing the discrimination. It was a positive conversation, though there has been little in the way of follow-up or ongoing discussion with those Senior Managers since.

By the summer of 2023, EAC members became increasingly frustrated with how much time the Monograph was taking, seemingly delaying advancement on the Third-party Evaluation process. Some EAC members also expressed dissatisfaction with the draft Monograph's contents. Members felt there were instances where the consultants had failed to fully consider guidance and advice provided by EAC members.

A further source of frustration was a feeling by many members of being inundated with information (often PowerPoint presentations) at formal meetings with little to no time in advance to digest and consider what information imparted. Further, at times, EAC feedback was being sought by ISC with the expectation that EAC members provide immediate reactions to presentations, without time for the EAC members to discuss and deliberate their collective views on matters. ISC's use of an external facilitator to run meetings was also felt to restrict more fulsome discussion by EAC members.

These feelings of frustration culminated in EAC members meeting together for the first time without the other parties to air their frustration and concerns that we were not being utilized to our full potential. This was when EAC members agreed that it was important (and necessary) for the EAC to caucus both in advance of (and following) formal EAC meetings to discuss our

collective observations and advice on the information presented to us. Since this time, over the last year, the EAC has caucused fifteen times. Often, we have extended invitations to other complainant parties to join us. At various times, representatives from the Caring Society, AFN, and NAN attended our caucus meetings. The Caring Society, in particular, has encouraged us to not see our role as limited only to advising on the Third-Party Evaluation and that our expertise would be welcome on several ongoing issues at ISC related to Jordan's Principles, child and family and related services.

It was at the first EAC caucus meeting in the summer of 2023 that we decided to propose amendments to our Term of Reference (that had still not been fully finalized) to allow for the EAC to function and provide advice to the parties to its full potential. None of the parties objected to this proposal. Generally, our amendments to the TOR sought to do the following:

1. Highlight how 2022 CHRT 8 supports the parties receiving advice from the EAC in a number of areas relating to preventing the recurrence of discrimination;
2. Articulate how the EAC members should work together as a caucus before and after meetings with the parties to reach consensus on their observations, advice and communications with the parties;
3. Suggest mechanisms allowing the EAC to ask for and receive information from the parties to help us obtain a full understanding of programming and developments related to preventing the recurrence of discrimination (this included what we called a 'work plan' setting out a priority list of presentations and subjects that could be focused on at EAC/party meetings); and
4. Remove the requirement of EAC members to sign a confidentiality agreement. EAC members, as experts in their field, already bound by ethical guidelines within their professions, were comfortable with maintaining confidentiality vis-a-vis the media and third parties but felt that signing a confidentiality agreement (the general use of which has come under significant legal scrutiny of late) was unnecessary.

In late summer 2023, we presented our proposed amendments to the parties. At the time, Canada acknowledged there likely were some gaps in the original draft of the TOR relating to how the EAC operates, communicates, and receives information as a group. Edits by Canada to the TOR in the fall made some small changes to the wording but did not challenge the substance of the proposed changes. The Caring Society was supportive of the changes. We did not initially receive feedback from the AFN but were later advised that these changes had been supported through their internal processes.

In the fall, drawing on the amended TOR, the EAC caucus sought to exert greater control over formal EAC meetings, asking for the sharing of materials sooner and for certain issues to be on the agenda, including presentations that would allow the EAC to better understand key issues relating to preventing the discrimination that had been found in the CHRT decisions. In this regard, we had presentations on Jordan's Principle from the Caring Society and were supposed to

hear from ISC staff as well on this (but there was a last-minute cancellation and need to reschedule).

In addition, with the Monograph finished, work towards the hiring of the Third-Party Evaluators began in earnest. A subcommittee of the EAC was formed to advise ISC on the request for proposals and skills matrix for hiring the Third-Party Evaluators.

In mid and late fall, two developments occurred that halted the momentum that had finally started to build. First, Senior Associate Deputy Minister, Valerie Gideon, accepted a new position at Crown-Indigenous Relations. Danielle White came to fill her role as Canada's Co-Chair at formal EAC meetings. Second, in December, the Caring Society brought a non-compliance motion against Canada to the CHRT alleging continuing discrimination in relation to Jordan's Principle. At this time, Danielle White advised that Canada could no longer engage on anything related to Jordan's Principle with the EAC due to the litigation.

Since these two developments, the formal EAC meeting in February 2024, was somewhat strained. ISC continued to maintain it could not speak to anything about Jordan's Principle, and further advised that it sought several changes to the TOR we had proposed back in September, primarily limiting our role to advising on the Third-Party Evaluation and cultural competency training.

A more productive formal EAC meeting occurred in April 2024, where the EAC explained our position on the TOR and our view of how our expertise can be drawn to advise the parties more fulsomely on preventing discrimination. The new Senior Associate Deputy Minister, Michelle Kovacevic, attended this meeting and there was open and productive discussion.

However, shortly following this meeting, we received an email from legal counsel for the AFN, copied to several lawyers within the Department of Justice Canada, sending us a revised TOR that seeks to limit our role advising on the Third-Party Evaluation and cultural competency, as well as require members to sign a confidentiality agreement. An email from Danielle Smith followed this, advising that ISC would no longer compensate the EAC member caucus meetings unless these were approved by the parties in advance. The Caring Society subsequently sent an email disagreeing with the position of both ISC and the AFN, noting that their positions were taken without consultation with, or the consent of, the Caring Society.

## **D. Observations and Advice**

### *(1) The focus of the EAC role should be on preventing the recurrence of discrimination*

The EAC feels the current disagreement over its role and Terms of Reference must be worked out between the parties and, failing that, the parties seek guidance from the CHRT. However, based on our understanding of 2022 CHRT 8, we agree with the Caring Society that the expertise of the EAC advice need not be limited to advising on the Third-Party Evaluation or ISC cultural competency. Currently, the final report of the Third-Party Evaluators is anticipated for Winter 2027—nearly three years from now (past our contracted mandate). Our advice could be sought to

assist the parties in addressing issues of potential discrimination arising in the interim. Further, effective cultural competency alone cannot prevent the recurrence of the discrimination found by the CHRT; there are programming, service, oversight, and accountability issues in relation to ISC services to children and families that the EAC could be lending its expertise to. It must be recalled that the CHRT called the discrimination here “one of the worst possible cases” of racial discrimination and through many non-compliance orders has continued to find problems with Canada’s implementation of the main decision (2016 CHRT 2).

The parties ought to be drawing on the expertise of the EAC to provide advice on:

- (a) The design and implementation of an independent expert third party evaluation to identify and provide recommendations to redress discrimination identified by the Tribunal;
- (b) Immediate, interim and long-term measures that can be taken for the reform of ISC to redress discrimination in ISC programming that impacts on child and family well-being; and
- (c) “Cultural competency” policies, education and training, executive obligations to the department, staff performance measures and other reforms that the EAC views as necessary to prevent the recurrence of the discrimination.

*(2) There ought to be more of a focus on long-term reform and service delivery*

An ongoing frustration of the EAC over the past 2 years has been what we see as an inordinate focus by Canada on the Third-Party Evaluation, which has been significantly drawn out through the Monograph process and the time it is taking to get the RFP out. While important, the Third-Party Evaluation cannot be seen as a cure-all for preventing the recurrence of discrimination. The Caring Society is raising discrimination in Jordan’s Principle and other areas happening now, and the advice to the EAC can be harnessed to assist in dealing with this. Said otherwise, the evaluation of the department remains important but in the context of the successful implementation of long-term reforms.

The EAC can offer advice and assistance on the implementation of ISC’s Strategic Plan that includes four priorities:

1. Transferring control of services to Indigenous partners\*
2. Championing a culturally appropriate and high-quality service approach.
3. Transforming our practices.
4. Nurturing an engaged, respectful and healthy workforce.

\*The EAC has not been involved in the discussion or work towards transferring control of services to Indigenous partners. However, we fully support the transition and transfer of control and jurisdiction to Indigenous partners that is fully supported and funded.

### *(3) Shift from Cultural Competency to Cultural Humility*

The success of ISC service delivery depends on appropriate training of executives and employees.

The EAC received numerous presentations focused on Cultural Competency training from ISC representatives. We have verbally made several recommendations that focus specifically on refraining from focusing employee training on the term “cultural competency” to be replaced with the term “cultural humility.” It is significant that the term “cultural competency” is deeply embedded in ISC’s mandates as well as much of its work on training. By suggesting this change, the EAC notes that this is not only a change in title or language but a shift in a fundamental philosophy in training including curriculum, content and practice.

The EAC found the use of “cultural competency” problematic as it suggests that the trainee will become “competent” in another culture.<sup>1</sup> As Lekas, Pahl and Lewis state in their work “Rethinking cultural competence: Shifting to cultural humility”, the use of the term “cultural competence” predisposes that different cultures are “stagnant” and unchanging.<sup>2</sup> They further find that the use of “cultural competence” creates a “static and totalizing view of culture that connotes a set of immutable ideas embraced by all members of a social group” and thus “generates a social stereotype”.<sup>3</sup> They also maintain that although “training in cultural competence primarily increases provider knowledge, attitudes and skills”, this training does not reflect positively on those they are caring for and does not decrease disparities in care.<sup>4</sup>

Alternatively, the use of “cultural humility” has proven to be more effective for the recipients of care. Cultural humility “means admitting that one does not know” and “is willing to learn from patients about their experiences, while being aware of one’s own embeddedness in culture (s)”.<sup>5</sup> It is a process of “self-reflection to understand personal and systemic conditioned biases, and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a lifelong learner when it comes to understanding another’s experience. Cultural humility enables cultural safety”.<sup>6</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis affirm that “while competence suggests mastery, humility refers to an intrapersonal and interpersonal approach that cultivates person-centered care”.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, cultural humility

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<sup>1</sup> Helen-Maria Lekas, Kerstin Pahl, and Crystal Fuller Lewis. "Rethinking cultural competence: Shifting to cultural humility." *Health services insights* 13 (2020): 1178632920970580 and Caroline LilyTait, William Mussell, and Robert Henry. "Micro-reconciliation as a pathway for transformative change: Applying a reconciliation strategy to the everyday relationships Indigenous peoples have with the human service sector." *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 14, no. 2 (2019): 19-38, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 1.

<sup>3</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 1.

<sup>4</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 2.

<sup>5</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 2.

<sup>6</sup> First Nations Health Authority. (2017). FNHA’s Policy Statement on Cultural Safety and Humility. West Vancouver, British Columbia. Retrieved from <http://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Policy-Statement-Cultural-Safety-and-Humility.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 2.

training “encourages providers to reflect on their own beliefs, values and biases—explicit and implicit—through introspection thus, revealing their own cultural impact on patients”.<sup>8</sup>

*(4) ISC should develop a critical incident reporting system for Jordan’s Principle*

The EAC has noted that the Indigenous Services have based their interactions with First Nations communities based on a crisis driven model rather than placing preventative measures. A lack of funding was discussed as a major cause for failures relating to suicide prevention as well as a lack of First Nations healing centres. It was pointed out that the department responded to crisis situations with short term solutions but has not invested appropriate funding for prevention.

The EAC has discussed among the Caucus and raised at formal EAC meetings when speaking of Jordan’s Principle, the concept of creating a critical incident reporting system with monitoring indicators. In the realm of child welfare, there are standards that inform processes of monitoring that include definitions such as a “serious occurrence” intended to elevate further monitoring, investigation, reporting and processes for remedy. In relation to Jordan’s Principle, acts of discrimination against First Nations children and their families are worthy of monitoring to understand the facilitators of discrimination by ISC staff (the service provider). We assume that the culprit is a lack of knowledge about First Nations culture, however, this is one potential aspect that cannot be remedied through “cultural competency/humility” training and education. Further, we ask if ISC is actively and systematically monitoring facilitators of discrimination so that these acts can be understood, and steps can be taken to create remedies? The EAC has received no evidence of such monitoring by or of the service provider. It should not take a non-compliance order, or a three-year evaluation to identify and then implement processes of change to address factors that facilitate discrimination when standards and definitions to guide service delivery with a process of monitoring can be developed now.

This would include, first, the EAC advising on the creation of a foundation for a service delivery model including a critical incident reporting system and a process for implementing it. Second, the EAC would continue to give advice and monitor the effectiveness of the service delivery model and critical incident reporting system after it is implemented.

The EAC suggests that a working group could be created to work on this with ISC executives and staff. This is a measure that could be taken now to prevent the recurrence of discrimination instead of waiting for the final evaluation to take place. Further, this measure could be implemented to aid the future evaluation team with their work. This could include the EAC monitoring the critical incident reporting mechanism with quarterly reports.

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<sup>8</sup> Lekas, Pahl and Lewis, “Rethinking,” 2.



*(5) ISC should support the creation of an external Ombudsman to provide accountability and oversight*

The EAC received a presentation on “Doing Better for Indigenous Children and Families: A Report on Jordan’s Principle Accountability Mechanisms” by Naiomi Metallic (an EAC member), Hadley Friedland & Shelby Thomas. The report presents three interconnected accountability mechanisms (an Ombuds function, a Tribunal and legal supports for Indigenous children and families) safeguarding the needs of Indigenous children and families to prevent the recurrence of discrimination identified in 2016 CHRT 2 and subsequent decisions.

While such mechanisms would be external to ISC, and created by Parliament, the EAC advises that ISC could play a significant and persuasive role in calling for the creation of such bodies through legislation. ISC is a major service provider to children and families. In all the provinces and territories, there are ombuds and child advocates to oversee the provincial and territorial governments’ delivery of similar services to non-First Nations children. This is a major gap in oversight and accountability for First Nations children and families, and ISC could play a leading role in calling for this change. This could be happening prior to the final report by the Third-Party Evaluators.

*(6) Support and Endow Indigenous Youth Organizations*

Another short-term measure ISC and Canada could take that would assist in preventing the recurrence of discrimination is investing more in Indigenous Youth Organizations.

The EAC recently welcomed youth member Cedar Iahtail to the group and finds her perspective to be extremely significant and valuable. Cedar belongs to an Indigenous youth community known as the Assembly of Seven Generations (A7G). The A7G are a small grassroots Indigenous youth group who incorporated in 2015 as a response to limited services and a need for advocacy for Indigenous youth. They are a volunteer-based group who do not receive core funding and do not have full-time staff.

With Cedar’s support, the EAC invited Gabrielle Fayant from the A7G to present at the 12<sup>th</sup> EAC in-person meeting. Gabrielle presented “Considerations for ISC Reform for the Improvement of Social Determinants of Indigenous Youth” to the EAC, the co-parties and ISC representatives. Among other impressive activities, the A7G have developed their own methods to deal with limited services for Indigenous youth. This includes meetings every Friday (364 consecutive Fridays as of March 2024), Round Dances, Camps and Land-based activities and a retail enterprise. They have also created a number of valuable reports on the status of Indigenous youth with recommendations including the creation of an accountability mechanism.<sup>9</sup>

Following this presentation, the EAC members discussed how an endowment to Indigenous youth groups and organizations, including A7G, by the Federal government would encourage

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<sup>9</sup> Gabrielle Fayant and Carrington Christmas, “Accountability in our Lifetime: A Call to Honour the Rights of Indigenous Youth & Children” (February 2021), retrieved from [https://www.a7g.ca/uploads/9/9/9/1/99918202/accountability\\_in\\_our\\_lifetime.pdf](https://www.a7g.ca/uploads/9/9/9/1/99918202/accountability_in_our_lifetime.pdf).

their continuing work in the support and care of Indigenous youth including advocacy and traditional activities.

Drawing on the expertise of some of its members, the EAC would be pleased to work with the parties to create a plan for this endowment and access the appropriate contacts to help to bring this forward.

*(7) Include A7G in the Third-Party Evaluation*

After receiving the presentation from Gabrielle Fayant, the EAC recommends that the A7G who have created their own “Indigenous Youth Services Evaluation” reform measures including the “Seven Requirements for Ethical and Meaningful Engagement with Indigenous Youth” should be incorporated as evaluation advisors with the EAC and assist in advising the future evaluation team. They bring valuable insight and wisdom that can only enrich the advisory role provided by the EAC.

*(8) More work needed on “Honouring our Journey” Survey*

For over the last year, ISC has been working on qualitative and quantitative baseline survey to gather key information on cultural competency within ISC. The goal has been described to us as a survey that can honestly, respectfully, and directly gather information to move ISC forward to a culturally competent organization whose mandate is to provide high quality services to Indigenous peoples and support the transition of services to Indigenous Nations. Several EAC members have participated in preliminary meetings to discuss the creation of the “Honouring our Journey” survey that is being prepared by ISC. Before this project was introduced, the EAC suggested several questions for ISC employees to consider, including, “What does safety mean for a First Nations child?” and “What would it mean to have emotional and spiritual well-being or to be physically healthy?” EAC members have stated that everything that is being completed in this survey must be tied to the welfare of First Nations children. The “Honouring our Survey” first draft was disseminated to the EAC in April 2024, and we will be working with the survey team to reorient the questions not only to the service to and care of First Nations children, families and communities but also to cover other topics such as substantive equality, discrimination and Jordan’s Principle.

*(9) Feedback on ISC’s plans to develop and implement its own Human Resources Division*

The EAC supports ISC developing and implementing its own Human Resources division to facilitate and implement its strategic plan.

The EAC met with Sylvain Souigny, ISC Director General of Human Resources as well as Vivian Cousineau, Special Advisor, Indigenous Recruitment, Human Resources Branch during our 12<sup>th</sup> EAC in-person meeting. Although the EAC was supportive of ISC’s decision to create their own Human Resources branch, the proposed organizational model was found to be problematic. The proposed management triangle and mentions of organizational design including pillars were challenging as they tend to fall into Western organizational models that have proven

ineffective in the past. It is true that pillars as an organization model have been used in Indigenous governance organizational design to great effect. However, an EAC member introduced the concept of the “four doors” as a more effective alternative to create a fundamental change in approach when designing and implementing the new HR branch of ISC to ensure that the department is culturally humble, responsive and oriented on providing exemplary service to First Nations children, families and communities. Using the traditional “four doors” of the Lunaape/Mohican Medicine Wheel, this organizational design presents a “foundational and timeless concept...for the next seven generations.”<sup>10</sup>

Bremner and Bowman state that:

“The Eastern door—Be a Good Relative... represents being in good relations within ourselves and with each other. We come rested and ready to do the work and have co-created information from a place of rest and in relation with all things that affect the work we put forward: physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional. The Eastern Door represents community context and diverse ways of thinking and being, and it honors the many Indigenous pathways and experiences of the contributors. It reflects traditional, cultural, and spiritual ways of knowing as a process where we respectfully listen and seek to understand first, and then decide on best pathways together. This may be in the form of origin stories, traditional knowledge, oral history, language, culture, songs, and/or nonverbal examples (e.g., regalia, wampum belts, artwork).”

“Southern Door—Be of Good Mind...is the awakening, rooting, and centring of pre-contact and post-contact Indigenous and community-centred and -created knowledge and practices that are restorative, regenerative, and strength based. They protect the privacy and respect the sovereignty of Indigenous nations related to data, as well as cultural, intellectual, human, and non-human influences on scholarship. This may be in the form of oral agreements, treaty rights, Indigenous theories and frameworks or ethics, nation-to-nation agreements, pre-contact practices, and so on”.

“Western Door—Do Good Work...supports the development of culturally specific responsive and regenerative strategies, studies, policies, processes, and work products that align with the need for healthy, reciprocal, respectful, and relevant Indigenous approaches to evaluation. This may be in the form of contemporary applications of traditional knowledge, such as culture and treaties from the Southern and Eastern Doors. It also may include the ways in which western theories, knowledge, or processes have been adapted as successful examples with First Nations, Indigenous peoples, and/or within program and policy contexts of practice that have impact on Indigenous communities. The Western Door also provides a place to share developmental and impactful innovative theories, models, policies, and other strategies being tested and/or utilized by culturally grounded Indigenous scholars, practitioners, and warriors.”

“Northern Door—Be on a Good Journey...we use the wisdom of our Ancestors and Elders to be grounded in traditional knowledge as a way to celebrate traditional knowledge and/or to reflect and unpack the learnings we receive from challenges, restarts, and letting go of things not working. These are the Indigenous-evidence-informed and grounded pathways that will help the

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<sup>10</sup> Larry Bremner and Nicky Bowman. "Roots and Relations: Celebrating Good Medicine in Indigenous Evaluation." *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* 38, 1 (2023): 1-3.

future generations to walk on sacred pathways for innovative and sustainable Indigenous evaluation that inspires and grounds the next seven generations. This may include traditional ways of sense making, analysis, differentiating what “wisdom” is (our Elders) versus simply the production of more knowledge (Western ways). It may also consider how to come full circle to address the other doors, so that the authors and readers make these important connections as part of something bigger than themselves.”<sup>11</sup>

## **E. Conclusion**

The EAC recognizes that while ISC and the parties have different advisory bodies (e.g., NAC, JPOC, etc.), we are new and unique in being created by a consent order and decision of the CHRT. There is no past precedent to rely on here, and we are all figuring out the role of the EAC and best ways to interact with the parties and provide meaningful advice to prevent the recurrence of the discrimination. By necessity, there will be some trial and error. We are a group of people deeply concerned about the well-being of First Nations children and families and we want to help. We want our relationship with Canada and the other parties to be fruitful. We do not want to give up on the promise of this expert advisory committee, nor do we want the parties to give up on us.

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<sup>11</sup> Bremner and Bowman, “Roots and Relations,” 2-3.