



# Dialogue Forums Summary Report

**Legislative Assembly**

APRIL 12, 13 & 14, 2019 / REGINA SK



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

JUNE 11, 2019

To my fellow members of the Legislative Assembly,

Together, we are continuing to make progress as we advance our Nation. We changed the approach to our MNLA in April which was held at Evraz Place (Exhibit Hall C) in Regina - April 12-14, 2019.

Your participation, as always, is important to the future of our Nation. Our legislative body is central to good governance and the Assemblies are the venue to bring forward and debate our viewpoints on issues that shape our Nation. It is through this process that as a government, set a path for future generations.

I am pleased to share with you our new approach to the MNLA that facilitates dialogue and debate on key issues. This approach, adopted at our April MNLA allowed for small group breakouts on 4 key priority areas:



**Housing** Identifying issues, challenges and needs for Métis-specific housing facilities, programs and services for Métis families/citizens;

**Health** Identifying health & wellness issues and opportunities with the idea of improving the access of quality primary health care and improving health outcomes for Métis citizens;

**Constitutional Reform** Engaging and identifying best way of practice that will be undertaken to engage citizens in constitutional reform; and

**The Framework Agreement** Listening from Assembly members on approaches for community participation in the self-government consultation process.


I am confident you will review and reflect on these priority areas, talk to your communities about their needs and hopes, and share those insights at our next Assembly. We are responsible to our families, communities and our Nation and must consider future generations.

Over the course of my term, I have placed a priority on building a strong, healthy Nation that is transparent and accountable. I listen and respect the voices across our Nation to help achieve our rightful place in the heart of the Homeland. We are seizing an opportunity to set the path forward strategically and thoughtfully – like our predecessors did over a century ago.

I enjoyed seeing everyone and, more importantly, the critical discussions we embarked on together.  
Respectfully,

..... Glen McCallum  
..... Métis Nation-Saskatchewan, President



A woman with dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark jacket and a Métis sash, is speaking and holding a document. She is standing in front of a large screen displaying a presentation. To her right, a man wearing a traditional Métis beanie is listening. The entire image has a blue tint.

This new format was designed to encourage members of the Métis Legislative Assembly to talk about their needs, hopes and ultimately to bring insightful direction to the MNLA Assembly and to help create a vision for Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.

## PURPOSE OF DIALOGUE FORUMS

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This year, prior to the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly (Sunday, April 14, 2019), we invited citizens from across Saskatchewan representing 12 regions and 121 Locals to participate in focused discussion on four key areas. This was a new format designed to encourage Métis citizens/communities to talk about their needs, hopes and ultimately to bring insightful direction to the MNLA Assembly to help create a vision for the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan.

- Facilitated discussions were on four topics (Housing, Health & Wellness, MN-S Constitutional Reform, and Self-Government Framework). We had four one-hour facilitated forums where delegates had an opportunity to engage once in each topic area.
- Delegates included members of the Métis Nation Legislative Assembly and as such, they are the key decision-makers in the Métis Nation.
- These Dialogue Forums were part of a broader effort to develop evidence-based policy options to inform future decision-making. The goal of the forums was to solicit the feedback, input and thoughts of the participants on the development of plans in four key areas.
- The facilitators for each of the key topic areas provided an overview report to all of the delegates on April 13, 2019 which informed dialogue discussions. There was also a Q & A after each 'report back' presentation.
- The hope is that the sessions will provide guidance to staff, technicians and others engaged in developing strategies in these priority areas. It is important to note to participants that these sessions serve as an early 'touch-base' with leadership. More detailed engagements, discussions and deliberations will form a key part of moving forward.

## DESCRIPTION PRIORITY AREAS

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### 1. Constitutional Reform Dialogue Session

Facilitated by **Emilie Lahaie**, Lawyer, Associate at Cassels Brock and Blackwell LLP

Constitutions are living documents that are the foundation for governance. This dialogue session reflected upon the current MN-S Constitution and, with the engagement of MNLA members, examined ways in which the Constitution can be updated to consider changes to the MN-S government, and self-government discussions. Delegates had the opportunity to listen and share their ideas on strengthening the MN-S Constitution for a stronger government based on Métis values, traditions and culture.

### 2. Health and Wellness Dialogue Session

Facilitated by **Adel Panahi**, Director of Health, Métis Nation - Saskatchewan

The Métis Nation-Saskatchewan approaches Health and Well-Being from a holistic, family-centred, culture and community-based conception of health. Accordingly, MN-S health policies, programs and services ought to be inherently linked to social determinants of health, including housing, food security, training and education, employment, cultural identity, and wellness. Efforts to close the health gaps between Métis citizens and other Canadians will provide guidance on various approaches to address health inequities and close the gaps relating to the social determinants of health.

### 3. Self-Government Framework Dialogue Session

Facilitated by **Tom Isaac**, Partner, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP

Moving forward under a Nation-to-Nation relationship with other levels of governments requires vision, innovation, insight and strategies that include accountability, transparency and engagement as priorities. Understanding where we came from and where we are going as a Nation is key and ensuring there are metrics as the strategy is implemented will ensure the Nation is moving inclusively. This session provided a synopsis of the Self-Government framework and delegates were invited to begin the process of constructing the vision, mission and strategies of the Métis Nation, by responding to the four prepared questions for the dialogue.

### 4. Housing Dialogue Session

Facilitated by **Dorothy Myo**, Senior Director of Policy and Research, Métis Nation-Saskatchewan

Housing is a major concern for Métis citizens from all areas of Saskatchewan whether in urban or rural areas and, in particular, for seniors, single parents, youth, low-income families and those persons experiencing homelessness. In July 2018, the Métis Nation Housing Sub-Accord was signed with the federal government through which the design, delivery and administration of housing services will be undertaken by the Governing Members of the Métis Nation. That federal budget committed \$500 million over 10 years to support the implementation of a Métis Nation Housing Strategy on a national basis. During the four housing dialogue sessions, delegates provided direction and insight on innovative approaches to address housing needs and disparities.





Members of the Métis Legislative Assembly envisioned improved sustainable housing for all Métis citizens by the year 2029.

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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### 1. Constitutional Reform Dialogue Session

- Do you think that the MN-S Constitution has clearly outlined the MN-S and Métis citizens' mutual responsibilities, accountabilities and rights? Why and how?
- What changes would you like to see in the MN-S Constitution?
- What concrete actions do you believe would be key to reform the Constitution?
- How do you prefer to be engaged and consulted in a Constitutional reform process?

### 2. Health and Wellness Dialogue Session

- What kind of health and well-being programs and services are available in your community?
- What concrete actions or interventions do you believe should be taken to address the health disparities and inequities in Métis urban and rural communities?
- Do you have any advice or thoughts on how best to ensure that Métis citizens are engaged and consulted in developing options to address health and well-being issues and needs?
- If you imagine your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of health and well-being? What has changed? How are things better than now?

### 3. Self-Government Framework Dialogue Session

- How do you see the implementation of MN-S self-government framework?
- What concrete actions do you believe would be key to improve self-governance in Métis Nation-Saskatchewan? Community?
- How do you prefer to be engaged and consulted in the process of implementing the MN-S self-government framework?
- If you imagine your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of Métis Nation self-governance? What has changed? How are things better than now?

### 4. MN-S Housing Dialogue Session

- What is the current situation of Métis citizens housing in your community?
- What concrete actions or interventions do you believe should be taken into account to address this current housing situation?
- Do you have any advice or thoughts on how best to ensure that Métis citizens are engaged and consulted in developing options to address Métis citizens housing needs in rural Métis communities? Urban Métis communities?
- If you imagine or envision your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of housing? What has changed? How are things better than now?

## WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE DELEGATES - COMMON THEMES

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### 1. Constitutional Reform Dialogue Session

**Q: Do you think that the MN-S Constitution has clearly outlined the MN-S and Métis citizens' mutual responsibilities, accountabilities and rights? Why and how?**

- There are gaps that do exist between MN-S and citizens regarding responsibility, accountability and rights
- Need to have dispute resolution mechanisms
- Update the constitution
- Constitution training and communication is needed for communities and citizens
- Elders should be the resource, they should be the board who settles the disputes

**Q: What changes would you like to see in the MN-S Constitution?**

- Transparency and clearly define processes, roles, duties, and responsibilities in the constitution
- Establish Métis Judicial Body
- Training and communication
- Community and citizen engagement in constitutional reform
- Clear government and governance structures

**Q: What concrete actions do you believe would be key to reform the Constitution?**

- Clear roles and responsibilities of elected officials in the constitution
- Consensus-building through democratic process
- Improve self-governance capacity at local level
- Training, communication and engagement

**Q: How do you prefer to be engaged and consulted in a Constitutional reform process?**

- Grassroots-level engagement and face to face meetings
- Surveys and questionnaires
- Better communication with citizens
- Training
- Official meetings



## WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE DELEGATES - COMMON THEMES

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### 2. Health and Wellness Dialogue Session

**Q: What kind of health and well-being programs and services are available in your community?**

- Most of the services are accessible for Métis people in urban areas
- Access to health and well-being services is limited in rural communities
- Some services are available in both urban and rural communities
- Access to traditional medicine and traditional ways of healing

**Q: What concrete actions or interventions do you believe should be taken to address the health disparities and inequities in Métis urban and rural communities?**

- Increase accessibility to health and well-being services
- Provide Non-Insured Health Benefits to Métis Citizens
- More Métis health professionals
- Community health awareness and engagement
- Address medical transportation challenges
- Cultural responsiveness and Métis specific services
- Métis-specific health care system

**Q: Do you have any advice or thoughts on how best to ensure that Métis citizens are engaged and consulted in developing options to address health and well-being issues and needs?**

- More engagement and workshops at grassroots-level
- Using technology, social media, newsletters, radio to engage and communicate
- Provide financial and other supports for community meetings
- Enhance Métis capacity at the local level
- Do more research in communities and report back the results
- Engage with multi-levels of government
- Culturally-safe community engagement

**Q: If you imagine your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of health and well-being? What has changed? How are things better than now?**

- Métis-specific/Métis-owned Community Health and Wellness Hubs in Saskatchewan
- Every Métis citizen has a Métis Health Identification card
- Improved access to healthcare and prevention for Métis Citizens
- Affordable care and non-insured health benefits for all Métis people
- More Métis health professionals practicing in Saskatchewan
- Traditional practices and cultural responsiveness incorporated in healthcare system
- Continuous health and well-being engagement and education in communities

## WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE DELEGATES - COMMON THEMES

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### 3. Self-Government Framework Dialogue Session

**Q: How do you see the implementation of MN-S self-government framework?**

- More community engagement with grassroots and different levels of government
- Transparency and clear communication
- Accountability
- Self-governance training and education
- Create a strong governance structure

**Q: What concrete actions do you believe would be key to improve self-governance in Métis Nation Saskatchewan? Community?**

- Adopt a bottom-up approach and grassroots engagement
- Transparency and clear communication
- Work for Métis rights including hunting, fishing, land, housing, etc.
- Create Métis Judicial System
- Train locals on self-governance
- Accountability and clear roles and responsibilities

**Q: How do you prefer to be engaged and consulted in the process of implementing the MN-S self-government framework?**

- More group discussions, regional meetings and workshops
- Better communication and training
- Use social media to engage at grassroots level
- Support regional and local meetings

**Q: If you imagine your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of Métis Nation self-governance? What has changed? How are things better than now?**

- Stronger assertion on our RIGHTS, environment, land, water, etc.
- Proper government and democratic constitution
- Self-sufficiency in economy, policing, judicial system, etc.
- Better health, housing, education, mental health

## WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE DELEGATES - COMMON THEMES

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### 4. Housing Dialogue Session

**Q: What is the current situation of Métis citizens housing in your community**

- Lack of new home ownership
- Unaffordable housing
- Need for renovations and repairs
- Lack of housing
- Lack of control on housing at regional and local level
- Unfair decision-making process on housing

**Q: What concrete actions or interventions do you believe should be taken into account to address this current housing situation?**

- Accountable local housing authority boards
- Increase Métis home ownership
- Provide more affordable housing
- Provide sustainable housing in Métis communities
- Take anti-corruption measures
- Provide more Elder and senior housing

**Q: Do you have any advice or thoughts on how best to ensure that Métis citizens are engaged and consulted in developing options to address Métis citizens housing needs in rural Métis communities? Urban Métis communities?**

- Engagement at grassroots level
- Better communication
- Need assessment at local level
- Discuss Métis communities' housing priorities at elected level
- Separate politics and housing

**Q: If you imagine or envision your community in ten years from now, what is different in terms of housing? What has changed? How are things better than now?**

- Improved socio-economic status of Métis citizens
- Fair governance structure for decision-making on housing
- Improved sustainable housing
- Available senior housing
- Locally controlled housing authorities



## MN-S DIALOGUE FORUMS FINAL SUMMARY:

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Together, for the first time, members of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly worked to define and discuss key issues for our Métis Nation. With input from our citizens and communities, these first-time facilitated sessions made progress in four priority areas:

### **1. Constitutional Reform Dialogue Session**

### **2. Health and Wellness Dialogue Session**

### **3. Self-Government Framework Dialogue Session**

### **4. Housing Dialogue Session**

The Dialogue Forums were designed to solicit feedback, encourage debate and set an important path for the future.

More detailed engagements are being planned in specific areas. The Spring MNLA is proof that our discussions today will benefit our Métis Nation of tomorrow.

Maarsi cho and thank you for adding your important voice to the forums, either by your input or demonstrating your commitment for a stronger Métis Nation-Saskatchewan Government.

It is our responsibility to think about our families, our communities, our Nation and where we want them to be in 50 years or 100 years.

Glen McCallum, MN-S President





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