

# MMIW Data Subcommittee

## *Initial Priorities*

This summary provides a list of initial priority areas identified by members of the subcommittee during initial meetings. Challenges or problems within each priority area are numbered and additional considerations from the initial literature are provided.

### **A) Issues with collecting, tracking or reporting data**

1. Tribal affiliation or race is missing, unknown or assumed in databases, and recording/verification of this field is not mandatory
  - Recording and verification of tribal affiliation and race not mandated
  - Front line staff need training on how to ask about and verify identities (Deer, 2019)
  - Not utilizing family member DNA to compare to databases for potential matches (Schulz, 2015)
  - Federal agencies that investigate human trafficking do not require agents to record tribal affiliation, unless crime happened in Indian country because then they can decline to prosecute. Another reason provided for not collecting this information is that verifying tribal affiliation requires reviewing tribal documents or looking at blood quantum which can take a long time (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2017).
2. Records of death are inaccurate; systems fail to designate deaths as homicides, or falsely designate deaths as suicides
  - Not all suicides are autopsied, sometimes because the tribe religiously objects
3. Under-recording sexual assault & sexual exploitation
  - Hospital discharge and ambulatory care databases under-coding sexual exploitation
  - Rape kits are not being tested and status is not tracked from the time the kit leaves the hospital to when it is processed with law enforcement
  - Clinicians and medical record coders are untrained on sexual exploitation and collecting of racial data
4. Missing children are reported inadequately
  - Native children are sometimes treated (wrongly) as runaways rather than missing.
  - Data systems aren't connected to social service records
5. Reporting to certain databases is voluntary; Law enforcement or other first responders not required to report cases of violence or missing persons
  - Law enforcement or other first responders not required to report cases of violence or missing persons (Echo-Haw et al., 2019);
  - Lack of information on victim/offender relationship in Uniform Crime Report (Bachman et al., 2008)

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## **B) Cross-jurisdictional data is inconsistent or inaccessible**

1. Tribal law enforcement need access to cross-jurisdictional data
  - Federally deputized tribal prosecutors are not entitled to all law enforcement sensitive information (Indian Law & Order Commission, 2013); Tribal access program for national crime information (TAP) funding for federally recognized tribes to access and exchange data with national crime information databases for criminal justice and non-criminal justice purposes. Note: DOJ aiming to expand TAP to all 28 BIA law enforcement agencies by end of 2019. (U.S. Department of Justice, 2019).
2. Data is inconsistent jurisdiction to jurisdiction
  - No statewide standards of reporting, applicable to tribes as well, but National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to roll out in 2021

## **C) Data is underutilized**

1. Lack of data on perpetrators and socio-economic impact of violence against Native women
  - Not enough data on man camps, sporting events, and other industries notoriously complicit or involved in sex-trafficking and violence against Indigenous women
  - Need more data on how non-Native perpetrators groom and engage victims (Finn et al., 2016).

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