



RÉSEAU D'AFFAIRES DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS DU QUÉBEC
FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC BUSINESS NETWORK

NARRATIVE REPORT

Reporting Period: from January 1st to March 31st, 2011

The quarter of January to March was a period of some importance for the First Nations of Quebec Business Network (FNQBN) with the hosting of two trade shows: the first one was held in Trois-Rivières on February 16 and 17, and the second one, in Rouyn-Noranda, on March 23 and 24. Thanks to the presence of several media, the FNQBN benefited from a good visibility. This first edition gave us some indication as to why we couldn't get more people at this activity. The initiatives leading to the organization of our next show, which is scheduled for September. We want this activity to become a reference, where all the entrepreneurs can get together and exchange views. Our basic mission is to put entrepreneurs in contact and encourage them to work together and share their experiences for the benefit of others. The conferences were very well received and the attendance at the booths was encouraging. The feed-back received after this event is inspiring and it urges us to increase our efforts so that all our entrepreneurs are reached and gathered in a single venue.

Other activities were held during the quarterly period. We made visits to a some communities to talk about the Network and also to gauge the interest of people in adhering to it. The following communities were visited: Manawan, Wemotaci, Kipawa and Wendake. We also visited the community of Ekuanitshit, where the local economic development corporation was organizing a forum on entrepreneurship. The FNQBN took advantage of this opportunity to make a presentation which was attended by about forty persons.

The FNQBN also made a presentation of its services at the annual general assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC). The FNQBN wanted to take advantage of this opportunity to make itself known and to inquire about financing possibilities for the provision of training to entrepreneurs who would like to get courses relating to their activities. A follow-up, to be conducted in this sense, shall help determine if the FNQLEDC is interested in collaborating with the FNQBN.

All these visits allow the Network to make a name for itself, and to get involved in the different communities.

A NEW PROJECT OF THE FNQBN

Considering the very small number of answers received in connection with the transmission of a questionnaire designed to establish the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises in the communities, the FNQLEDC, in unison with the FNQBN, has put in place a project to identify the entrepreneurial index in the communities, considering that the information about the entrepreneurial dynamics in the communities dates back to several years and it does not allow to make enlightened decisions.

This project, which is to be carried out in partnership with the Fondation de l'entrepreneurship and in collaboration with Léger Marketing, shall identify answers to certain questioning and compare the entrepreneurial spirit of the Aboriginal peoples to that of the civil society.

The objective of this project is to get a fuller idea of the entrepreneurial dynamism amongst the ten Aboriginal Nations of Quebec. The basic indicators of the entrepreneurial dynamism shall find out about the stages of the entrepreneurial process that are the most problematic in the communities, as well as those that are considered more as a lever. These data will help in prioritizing the actions of the FNQLEDC, with a view to improve its entrepreneurial dynamism. The intent of this project is to reach about 300 respondents (community economic development agents and entrepreneurs) from the aboriginal population, which could be considered as being representative of the ten nations.

This project will help establish the exact and precise information on the following indicators and on the capacity to compare oneself with the overall population of Quebec:

- Percentage of Quebec's Aboriginal adult population having the intention of getting started in business;
- Percentage of Quebec's Aboriginal adult population currently at the development stage;
- Percentage of Quebec's Aboriginal adult population currently owning a business;
- Percentage of Quebec's Aboriginal population having closed down a business at one point in time.

EFFECT OF HAVING THE FNQBN

The FNQBN tries as much as possible to participate in events that could support it in its activities. Presently, we provide services to about twenty members, thanks to our section of the FNQLEDC Website. The FNQBN expects to have its own website in a near future and the members will access all the information they need, through a personal code. The FNQBN is striding along and the persons in charge strive to satisfy all its members. The positive comments received so far are an incentive for us to deploy even more efforts in attaining our goal of honoring our commitments towards our members.

The network makes it a point to send regular and pertinent information to its members, (information relating to aboriginal and civil events, entrepreneurship, along with a monthly newsletter, etc.), and it has entered into partnerships with organizations that are in a position to provide benefits to its members, such as the Centre d'études collégiales de Chibougamau, and the law firm of Neashish et Champoux who offer preferential rates to the members of the FNQBN.