



FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC AND LABRADOR  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**THE FNQBN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
ADVISER'S QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT**

**MARCH 2012**

# QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT

## FNQBN

Several meetings were held in different communities. The aim of these meetings was to:

- meet with the entrepreneurs of the community; and
- talk about the First Nations of Quebec Business Network.

### *Meeting in Wemindji (January 11 to 13, 2012)*

12 people took part in this meeting. The entrepreneurs followed the unfolding of the presentation on the Network. First, I talked about the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC) and its mission, and it was noted that none of the attendees ever heard about the FNQLEDC. I then spoke about the Network and the services it provides. The presentation lasted 25 minutes and many questions were asked. Out of the 12 persons present, three immediately joined the Network, believing strongly that it can help them particularly in their search for financing and in meeting other entrepreneurs.

We noticed one entrepreneur who is very involved in the community and who could become a mentor. Information was provided to help him understand what is expected from a mentor and the advantages he would have in getting involved for his community.

### *Meeting in Waswanipi (January 26 2012)*

Approximately 25 persons attended this meeting. The entrepreneurs followed the unfolding of the presentation on the Network. We talked about the Network and the services it offers. This meeting lasted about one hour and thirty minutes. There were a lot of questions. The entrepreneurs are very dynamic in this community, and they wanted to have a good understanding of all the services we offer through the Network, which, in turn will help them decide if joining the Network would be the right thing for them. An atmosphere of trust has been established between the entrepreneurs and us, and I feel that, having gained the trust of these entrepreneurs gives a lot of hope for the future. Several have shown an interest in becoming a member of the Network, believing that it can help them particularly in their search for financing and in meeting other entrepreneurs.

### **Meeting in Chisasibi (March 2 2012)**

Mr. Thayaparan Thiyagarajah and I met each entrepreneur separately so they would feel at ease to talk and ask questions. This formula proved to be a success, because each person talked about its own project, the difficulties encountered and the help desired from the Network.

In turn, the Network offered them a presentation providing information on its services, and explained all the support they can get.

Afterwards, Mr. Thayaparan Thiyagarajah and I toured the community, visited the different businesses with a view to better understand the real needs of that community.

The Network will be participating in the Career Day of Chisasibi to be held in April. At that event, the Network will be hosting an information booth with a view to reach as many people as possible, to get the Network known and ensure that this population has a reference when its members wish to start up or consolidate a business.

### **Meeting with FaunEnord (January 25 2012)**

We met with Ms Mireille Gravel, Interim Director General of FaunENord.

FaunENord is a non-profit organization (NPO) dedicated to promoting the sustainable planning of wildlife resources and ecosystems. They have 10 years of field experience and they cover all parts of the Northern Quebec territory, from Ivujivik to Villebois-Val Paradis-Beaucanton.

They are known regionally for their professionalism, for the quality of their services and for their engagement in the economic development of Northern Quebec.

FaunENord works in different fields, such as education, expert advice, forestry, research and development, development of forest products they sell on the local market. They already work with different Aboriginal communities, such as Chisasibi, Eastmain, Mistissini, Oujé-Bougoumou and they wish to have a larger market to provide their expertise.

FaunENord also proposes different activities, such as:

- Adult education and training (ornithology which allows to discover different groups of birds, mycology which allows to recognize edible mushrooms, wilderness survival techniques, use of map, compass and GPS, etc....)
- Science adventures for young children (experience on incandescent material and creation of different types of invisible ink, aquatic life, archeology, chromatography which is the scientific analysis of sweets)

- Guided nature outings (forest exploration, forest rally, ballads through slash-and-burn fields, edible plants and wetlands)

This meeting was an opportunity for the Network to work with FauENord, considering that it is already present in certain communities. Their expertise would help meet certain needs of some communities, such as Wemindji, who would like to acquire an expertise in mushroom harvesting, since this community exports mushrooms to Japan. Given their proximity, it would greatly reduce the travel costs if we were to use their services, either for training or for coaching purposes.

Ms Gravel has shown a strong desire to be part of our Network; in doing so, a greater number of communities could be reached and they would benefit from her services.

### **Meeting with Eeyou Economic Group (January 26 2012)**

The First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC), represented by Jean-Francois Côté and Anne E. Legagneur met with Eeyou Economic Group (EEG) to see how they could work together to answer the needs of the Cree economic development officers.

The mission of EEG is to provide professional business services to the Cree clients. Those services would promote their economic development.

EEG is a CFDC, created in 1987 to provide community services to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs of the Cree Nation. It is an independent and non-political organization.

Eeyou Economic Group is supported, under certain conditions by Canada Economic Development (CED) and provides financing under the form of reimbursable loans to the Cree entrepreneurs who wish to start a new business or expand and/or modernize an existing business in Eeyou Istchee.

EEG currently invests in six Cree communities and employs 36 persons. As a result of EEG's annual plan, the Commission could intervene in different spheres in conjunction with EEG. For example, together, we could provide these training sessions planned for the EEG CEDOs, award a prize for the Cree entrepreneur of the year at the EEG Gala, participate in the Cree-Algonquin Gala evening, etc....

Within the scope of their annual plan, the intervention of the Commission would also be pertinent in the project called «Strengthening support to entrepreneurs and collectivities through programs or services capable of improving human capital and entrepreneurial capacities». This project would allow among others to work with the youths in developing their entrepreneurial culture.

Different events are planned with EEG for the year 2012 – 2013:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>March 2012</b>	EEG Board of Director meeting	Chibougamau
<b>March 28 and 29 2012</b>	Tourism Symposium	Chibougamau
<b>April 26 and 27 2012</b>	Forum sur le Plan Nord	Quevillon
<b>November 7 and 8 2012</b>	Training of members and annual gala	Val d'Or
<b>December 6 2012</b>	Business Exchange Day – Cree Nation	Val d'Or

### **Congrès du Tourisme Autochtone Québec (February 21, 2012)**

Quebec Aboriginal Tourism organized a conference on February 20 to the 22nd as a venue for networking and exchanges. This event marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this association.

At this conference, different workshops were offered: demystifying the meaning of quality, recruiting via the social media, coping with seasonal fluctuations and recognition of competencies, integrating the distribution network.

After these workshops, a cocktail, followed by a banquet was offered with the intent of allowing the attendees to get known.

The FNQBN hosted a booth at this event which turned out to be a good opportunity for promotion.

In total, some fifty people attended this conference.

### **Meeting in Wemotaci (February 24 2012)**

Following a consultation of the community, the Corporation de développement économique Nikanik, through Carrefour formation Mauricie, gave a training session to some fifteen people in business plan development. The Carrefour formation Mauricie takes an active part in the development of entrepreneurship by offering updated training to people interested in exploring or developing a business plan.

The objective of this training consists in achieving a business plan and acquiring the permanent skills required by an entrepreneur to efficiently manage his business. In order to achieve his business plan and acquire the minimal skills as provided for under the training program, the promoter is expected to invest 330 hours, including 78 hours of theoretical course, 6 hours of personalized assistance program and 246 hours of personal initiatives and writing.

The entrepreneurs, whose business plan was completed at 90 %, followed the unfolding of the presentation on the Network. We talked about the Network and the services it provides. This meeting lasted close to two hours and thirty minutes, because aside from the Network, the Aboriginal Business Incubator Platform (ABIP) and the First Nations Venture Capital of Quebec (FNVCQ) also gave a presentation on services it can offer to the community. These meetings had been requested, due to the fact that the future entrepreneurs feared being left to themselves once the training provided by *Carrefour formation Mauricie* was over. There were a lot of questions. The entrepreneurs are quite dynamic in this community, and they wanted to have a good understanding of all the services we offer in the Network, and see if it would be pertinent for them to become a member. Several persons showed an interest in becoming a member of the Network, because they are convinced it can help them find financing, help them with the training being offered and also meet other entrepreneurs.