



## *How the Unama'ki First Nations lever government and corporate sector partnerships: Lessons learned and critical success factors from the Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office*



### What is the research about?

A broad range of different factors shape the success of First Nation owned businesses and employment initiatives. Numerous studies have sought to identify and assess the benefits that government and industry partnerships can bring to support First Nation owned businesses and employment. The Mi'kmaw Economic Benefits Office (MEBO) is a multipurpose institution that is working to build such partnerships, helping to bridge gaps in understanding between First Nation and non-First Nation partners, developing employment training programs, and facilitating collaboration across community, government, and industry sectors. The research examined MEBO's critical success factors, as well as potential barriers and limitations to establishing partnerships that are appropriate to the business and employment needs of First Nation communities and to their goals for self-determination.

### What does the research do?

The research provides lessons learned and best practices from multilevel regional partnerships created by the MEBO. New insights are provided into the ways that government and corporate sector partnerships support (and sometimes hinder) Atlantic First Nation owned businesses and employment initiatives. In addition to critical success factors, the research also discusses potential barriers and limitations that First Nation businesses need to be mindful of when developing partnership strategies.

### Why is the research important?

First Nation individuals and businesses face many socio-economic barriers when seeking secure employment opportunities on major projects. The reality of major projects is such that First Nation interests can easily get crowded out by larger mainstream interests. This reality can be especially acute for major projects in the industry sectors that MEBO has set out to penetrate, where First Nation businesses and labour are largely underrepresented and may have limited influence. The research will assist First Nation and non-First Nation leaders better understand the role an Economic Benefits Office can play in building meaningful partnerships that will meet the demands of industry and increase economic activity in First Nation communities.

### Research Team:

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