



**FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC
AND LABRADOR HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMISSION**

***Self-Determination:
The Key to First Nations
Wellness***

***Brief on the Government Action Plan to
Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion***

Submitted to

Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

June 30, 2023

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INTRODUCTION

On April 18, 2023, Chantal Rouleau, Minister Responsible for Social Solidarity and Community Action, launched *Ensemble vers le 4^e plan de lutte contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale*, a public consultation to develop the fourth government action plan to combat poverty and social exclusion. The purpose of the consultation is to modernize the various programs in these areas. This brief summarizes some of the issues facing First Nations and proposes a number of approaches that the Government of Quebec should implement to better reflect the needs of First Nations in its programs and to redefine solidarity. More importantly, we ask that the Government of Quebec respect First Nations inherent right to self-government and that it not hinder the effective operation of health and social services organizations as well as those fighting poverty and social exclusion located on First Nations territories. We ask that our arguments and recommendations be taken into account as the *Government Action Plan to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion* is reviewed as part of these special consultations. We call on the Government of Quebec to consider our proposal to redefine solidarity.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC) is a non-profit association established in 1994 by resolution of the Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL). It is responsible for supporting the efforts of Quebec First Nations to plan and deliver culturally appropriate and preventive health and social services. The FNQLHSSC's mission is to support Quebec First Nations in achieving their health, wellness, culture and self-determination goals. Its main areas of action are related to governance, early childhood, health, social services, social development, research and information resources.

1. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The systemic poverty experienced by First Nations is the result of many obstacles encountered within communities, some of which are rooted in **the history of colonialism and systemic racism**. These include food insecurity¹, limited economic opportunities², intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools³, the housing crisis⁴, and underfunded administrative services. Although the Quebec population also faces some of these challenges, First Nations are particularly affected by their cumulative effects, scope and systemic nature. First Nations are significantly more likely to experience poverty because of this structural socio-economic disadvantage.

¹ According to the 2015 Quebec First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS), 12.3% of First Nations members live in a situation of moderate food insecurity and 8.8% of them live in a situation of severe food insecurity. <https://cssspnql.com/produit/ers-rapport-de-lenquete-regionale-sur-la-sante-des-premieres-nations-du-quebec-ers-2015/>

² More than 50% of the First Nations population aged 18 and over are unemployed, *Ibid.*

³ 17% of the First Nations population report that they were placed in a foster family during childhood and 62.5% have at least one family member who attended residential school, *Ibid.*

⁴ 23.1% of the First Nations population aged 18 years and older live in housing with mould and 10.1% live in overcrowded housing, *Ibid.*

It should also be noted that poverty affects all other social determinants of health, such as access to health care, quality housing, and higher education. Campaigns and initiatives have been carried out to improve the situation, including the *2017-2022 Government Action Plan for the Social and Cultural Development of the First Nations and Inuit*; however, their effects remain to be seen.

There is a tension at play between the impacts of labour shortages in communities, which limits access to services and development resources, and the distance of many individuals from the labour market, as they must first **reintegrate socially**. Communities are best positioned to alleviate this tension and an important key is **to promote their culture and traditions**. For some communities, traditional subsistence activities make up a portion of their economy. However, Western indicators of poverty do not take these into account. It is important to note that community hunting plays a role in reducing food insecurity. Thus, a definition of the fight against poverty for First Nations would include **full access to the territory** to feed, care for, recharge and develop themselves as individuals and communities.

In an Indigenous context, the fight against poverty goes hand in hand with **cultural safety** not only in Quebec programs and calls for projects, but also in the communities themselves. Cultural safety means considering culture as a foundation on which to build initiatives. It is not just a matter of implementing culturally appropriate projects, but of considering First Nations culture and identity as prerequisites for the emergence of culturally meaningful strategies that can lead to the development of individuals and communities. According to the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH), the concept of cultural safety moves **beyond cultural sensitivity** or cultural competency; it fosters an environment free of racism and stereotypes between individuals, as it stems from **critical reflection** by organizations about the values they convey. Cultural safety “challenges power imbalances, institutional discrimination, colonization and colonial relations as they apply to healthcare.⁵” The various levels of government involved must recognize that we are all bearers of culture and reflect on the impact of their own culture on the programs and initiatives to be developed with First Nations for their well-being.

Fighting poverty among First Nations through cultural safety therefore involves recognizing and **respecting the inherent right of Indigenous people to self-government and self-determination**. It is important to note that these rights have been repeatedly reaffirmed in many Canadian and international instruments, including the Canadian Constitution⁶ and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.⁷ It should no longer be assumed that First Nations will comply with the application of provincial and federal laws that infringe on their rights and forms of governance. Instead, they are calling on governments to recognize their rights and forms of governance, and to remove the structural barriers they have created, so that First Nations can carry out their local and regional initiatives to meet the needs of their communities and Nations.

We believe that cultural safety must **consider health in a First Nations holistic perspective** which includes economic, social and community health. In this sense, true cultural safety implies that First Nations can exercise their right to self-determination.

⁵ National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health. <http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/>

⁶ Section 35: “The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are recognized and affirmed.”

⁷ Article 4: “Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.”

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Government of Quebec respect the inherent right of First Nations governments to self-determination and cultural safety, which implies recognition and respect for our institutions and areas of jurisdiction.
2. That the Government of Quebec develop an action plan in consultation with First Nations to eliminate the systemic barriers under its jurisdiction that hinder them in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

2. SPECIFIC COMMENTS

2.1 INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

When it comes to income and employment, the social determinants of the various communities show how concerning the quality of life of First Nations people is.⁸ In 2013, 53.6% of adults had an **annual income below \$20,000**⁹, and 23.3% of First Nations people in Quebec were on the income security program, while the national average for the province was 6.1% (2017). These rates are close to 50% in some communities, particularly those furthest from urban centres. Even more alarming, while 50% of adults were unemployed in 2014, 58% of them were not looking for work. This latter statistic can be put into perspective with the fact that a significant proportion of income security recipients are **a long way from integration into the labour market** and require specific pre-employability support.

The income and employment barriers facing communities are largely related to employee hiring and retention. **Job opportunities, however, are fewer in and around communities**, particularly remote ones. As a result, economic turnover is low in most of them. The **language barrier** is another factor, especially for individuals in English-speaking communities who have difficulty finding work in predominantly French areas. Finally, the **systemic and institutional discrimination and racism** that First Nations still experience in various environments is another important obstacle to their integration into the labour market.

There is also a **wage gap** that places First Nations at a disadvantage compared to the province when it comes to professional or specialized jobs requiring a higher level of education. In fact, the highest-paid jobs are often those requiring the most education, with the result that most First Nations professional opportunities are limited to entry-level, technical or intermediate positions. At the same time, **the cost of living is higher in remote areas**, widening the wealth gap.

⁸ NCCIH (2009). *Health Inequalities and the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health*, British Columbia, 52 pages. Retrieved on June 30, 2017. <http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/46/Health%20Inequalities%20&%20Social%20Determinants%20of%20Aboriginal%20Peoples%27%20Health%20%28English%29.pdf>

⁹ FNQLHSSC (2013). Quebec First Nations Regional Health Survey – 2008, Wendake, c. 1, p. 10.

Lastly, there is a major challenge regarding the transmission of information on accessible programs and services, including those provided by the Government of Quebec. This information is not always shared with all Indigenous stakeholders in a timely manner, even when **a coordinating period is required with the federal government**. As a result, some communities miss out on opportunities, or a gap is created between provincial and community recipients during the coordination period. This was the case, for example, with the review of the Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale's *Politique de soutien du revenu* (income support policy) in 2022, the *Programme d'aide à la relance par l'augmentation de la formation* (recovery assistance through increased training program) in 2021, and the *First Nations and Inuit Employment Integration Program*.

Similarly, information from the Government of Quebec and the organizations under its responsibility is sometimes not communicated in **an accessible language**, particularly for English-speaking communities, which make up nearly half of all First Nations communities in Quebec. For example, sectoral workforce committees offer presentations of their services in English, but the supporting documentation is rarely translated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Government of Quebec communicate its information to First Nations prior to any new income security and employability measures or policies, and that it include means to reach all First Nations so that they can access the measures and programs that apply to them.
4. That the Government of Quebec formally commit to strengthening its relationship with First Nations to combat racism and discrimination, particularly in the labour market. A first step would be to contribute to the implementation of the AFNQL *Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination*.¹⁰
5. That the Government of Quebec respects the statements of commitment made in its Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People and ensure the implementation of all measures resulting from the Grand Economic Circle.¹¹
6. That provincial and federal authorities work with First Nations to develop a long-term investment plan to ensure the sustainable economic development of First Nations communities. That this funding be enhanced, recurring and distributed fairly among the communities, and not through a call for projects. That the conditions governing its management provide First Nations with the flexibility to meet their own economic development needs and realities.
7. That the Government of Quebec, in consultation with First Nations and federal authorities, commit to resolving problems related to jurisdictional disputes to eliminate disparities between Quebec and First Nations social assistance beneficiaries.

¹⁰ AFNQL. *Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination*, Wendake, September 29, 2020, 19 pages. https://itum.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/PLAN-ACTION-RACISME-ET-DISCRIMINATION_VF.pdf

¹¹ Hydro-Québec commitments: "Develop a procurement strategy with Indigenous businesses, in collaboration with Indigenous economic stakeholders; organize an Indigenous workforce forum, with the goal of becoming an employer of choice in communities; donate \$500,000 for the creation of a School of First Nations leaders at HEC Montréal; create an initiative that will support entrepreneurship among First Nations and Inuit women." Internal document of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Economic Development Commission, accessible upon request only.

2.2 EDUCATION, FAMILIES AND ELDERS

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

Some communities report a lack of access to financial resources or access to **financial resources that are not adapted** to their reality and geographical context. For example, the Ministère de la Famille has never provided specific guidelines for recognizing a disadvantaged or even remote environment for early childhood centers¹², resulting in financial limitations.

The family is the primary place of education for children. With the primary goals of preserving family ties and protecting their culture, various Indigenous organizations have been campaigning for better governance in youth protection. The **Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families**¹³, adopted in 2020, is a step in this direction. However, the Government of Quebec is challenging the constitutionality of this act in the highest court in the country, which seriously hinders the recovery of First Nations rights. Similarly, it appealed a Court of Québec decision, in which the Court, in accordance with the *Loi de la protection sociale atikamekw d'Opitciwan*¹⁴ (Atikamekw of Opitciwan Social Protection Act), declined jurisdiction over a child who was a member of that community.

The lack of access to college, university and vocational institutions has significant implications for educational quality, and eventually economic health.¹⁵ **Having to leave the community to study** in the city can cause a culture shock that may lead to significant social isolation. This **isolation** can in turn lead to a variety of consequences, including substance abuse, financial struggles, mental health issues, and even homelessness.

Another element deserving particular attention is the fact that in Quebec, almost half of all communities speak English as a second language, after their Indigenous mother tongue. Once ready for higher education, many must choose between learning French to be able to access certain programs or give up on their studies. The *Act respecting French, the official and common language of Quebec* has reinforced this **barrier to access to education**. It even infringes on ancestral and fundamental rights of Indigenous peoples.

In order to enhance the role of the First Nations elders in the collective identity, their **traditional knowledge**, both medicinal and cultural, **must be recognized** and passed on. In addition, their biological, psychological, social and spiritual needs must be taken into account and viewed as protective factors. First Nations already have many initiatives in place, namely elders homes and 'elders councils. We must support them to enable their implementation and expansion. For example, because they are not considered a municipality or an organization, First Nations communities struggle to obtain adequate funding through programs (e.g., Municipalités amies des aînés or Québec ami des aînés). **Accountability and administrative demands do not reflect the realities, funding methods or cultures of First Nations**. In addition, some of the projects

¹² Excluding the Cree and Inuit, who have their own agreement with the Ministère de la Famille.

¹³ S.C. 2019, c. 24.

¹⁴ Came into force on January 17, 2022. Opitciwan Atikamekw Council. Online: <https://www.opitciwan.ca/pdf/LSPAO%20%20Loi%20sur%20la%20protection%20sociale%20Opitciwan.pdf>

¹⁵ According to the 2015 RHS, 32.7% of the First Nations population aged 25 and over do not have a high school diploma. Online: <https://cssspnql.com/en/produit/rapport-de-lenquete-regionale-sur-la-sante-des-premieres-nations-du-quebec-ers-2015/>

submitted by communities – typically sweat lodges or traditional development projects – are automatically discarded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. That educational institutions under provincial jurisdiction provide more distance training tailored to the reality of communities or collaborate with First Nations organizations to create post-secondary programs and institutions in the communities to prevent First Nations people from being forced to move to urban centres.
9. That the Government of Quebec recognize the importance of language and education to the identity of First Nation and protect them, particularly through access to higher education in English for their people, and by no longer legislating Indigenous languages without the consent of First Nations.
10. That the Government of Quebec respect the right to self-determination by respecting the laws adopted by local First Nations governments.
11. That the Government of Quebec respect the specific and full expertise of First Nations organizations in education, youth protection and the well-being of elders; collaborate fully to support more culturally and identity-sensitive programs; and adapt eligibility and accountability criteria to provide more flexibility and resources.

2.3 ESSENTIAL NEEDS

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

From the outset, we can see that many essential needs are not being met in all Indigenous communities in Quebec. It is important to remember that in 2023, not all communities are connected to a **power grid** and not all have **access to running drinking water**. Although steps are being taken to address these most serious issues, great work remains to be done to catch up. In terms of nutrition, there is limited access to fresh, healthy, varied and affordable food, particularly due to transportation and production challenges.

Similarly, many communities still do not have **access to reliable and stable Internet and cellular connections**. In 2020, broadband Internet access was available to only 44.7% of First Nations communities in Quebec¹⁶, compared with 91.8% of Quebec households in 2019.¹⁷ The Premier made a commitment to connect the whole province to high speed in 2018, when he launched Operation High Speed. With the deployment of optic fibre throughout Quebec, it is also becoming possible and essential to provide cellular access everywhere, at reasonable costs.

Finally, **jurisdictional issues** and the **sharing of responsibilities between the federal and provincial governments** are additional barriers to access to services for First Nations. We can refer, for example, to the position of the government of Quebec **not to offer any services**, except for medical services, within the territories of non-treaty communities.¹⁸ In this sense, unless there is a specific agreement, many First Nations communities are unable to offer their population the

¹⁶ <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/espaces-autochtones/1463260/internet-crtc-autochtones-reserve>

¹⁷ <https://www.lapresse.ca/affaires/2021-02-10/acces-a-l-internet-haute-vitesse/le-quebec-deuxieme-au-pays.php>

¹⁸ Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux. <https://www.msss.gouv.qc.ca/professionnels/soins-et-services/particularites-des-services-aux-communautes-autochtones/contexte/> and <https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/fichiers/2007/07-725-01.pdf> p.12

full range of services that the provincial government normally provides to people living outside these communities.

As a result, First Nations are experiencing great difficulty in receiving **psychosocial services**, which has the effect of making already marginalized populations even more vulnerable. The issues related to the lack of staff visiting communities are well documented and result in **increasing gaps in services**.

RECOMMENDATIONS

12. That the Government of Quebec participate in defining food security in partnership with First Nations to better understand the obstacles, in addition to proposing and implementing actionable solutions that meet the specific realities of First Nations.
13. That the Government of Quebec honour its commitment to connect the entire province to high-speed Internet and make cellular connectivity accessible to all First Nations communities in Quebec.
14. That the provincial government work with First Nations and the federal government to find actionable solutions to jurisdictional issues limiting access to health and social services for First Nations, with the goal of establishing continuums of care that meet the principle of substantive equality¹⁹.

2.4 Proximity and social inclusion

SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

One of the main obstacles to economic development for First Nations is the fact that, against their will, they were **plunged into a capitalist market economy during colonization**, far removed from their traditional economy. Today, those who want to enter the labour market are often faced with a difficult choice: join companies and organizations outside the community, where they are often at risk of experiencing racism and discrimination, and where their territory and culture may be jeopardized, or establish a business or organization within their community and attempt to grow under restrictive conditions. **The social and circular economy** is an alternative solution for creating jobs adapted to the realities of individuals, and for promoting the autonomy and self-sufficiency of communities. It is important to accelerate decolonization efforts in that sense.

These efforts must include full recognition of First Nations land management autonomy. Having **access to and management rights over land and resources** is one of the best ways to combat economic marginalization and social exclusion. Moreover, First Nations possess unique knowledge and expertise, which are key to protecting the territory. They also have more difficulty coping with the effects of climate change as they directly affect their territories, their way of life, and the exercise of their rights. Similarly, their overly limited and sometimes infringed land governance rights, combined with the vulnerability of the natural environments in which they live, limit their ability to adapt to climate change and their access to traditional food, while at the same time putting them at

¹⁹ Government of Canada: "Substantive equality is achieved when one takes into account, where necessary, the differences in characteristics and circumstances of minority communities and provides services with distinct content or using a different method of delivery to ensure that the minority receives services of the same quality as the majority. This approach is the norm in Canadian law." <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/values-ethics/official-languages/public-services/analytical-grid-substantive-equality.html>

risk of natural disasters such as forest fires and floods. It is therefore important to fully **include First Nations in all stages of development projects and decision-making processes.**

We also note a **barrier in the administrative management** between federal and provincial boundaries for services in the territories. The federal government organizes the First Nations territory in **geographic zones** (1, 2, 3 and 4), ranging from the territories closest to urban centres to the most remote. The Government of Quebec, on the other hand, manages public employment services within the territory on a regional basis. This **lack of consideration for remoteness** (or, at best, a piecemeal consideration, depending on the department) by the province penalizes people from various communities located in an administrative region where services are offered, but are several hours away from home. Coordination with **regional county municipalities** (RCMs) should also be considered. We have noted that First Nations are not eligible to much of the funding they make available due to some restricting criteria, which contributes to exclude them from regional initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15. That the Government of Quebec increase its collaborative efforts on the social and circular economy to provide the funding necessary for First Nations to develop social economy initiatives.
16. That the Government of Quebec provide support, including financial support, to raise awareness among businesses and organizations dedicated to economic, environmental, artistic or cultural development regarding the realities and cultural particularities of First Nations, and that this support be established in consultation with their organizations, the federal government and the provincial authorities.
17. That the Government of Quebec recognize the full importance of the fundamental rights, of leadership and vision of First Nations regarding the protection of the territory and increase its actions in terms of land and environmental protection, while paying particular attention to their needs.
18. That the Government of Quebec recognize the importance of dividing the territory based on remoteness and take this into account when delivering services to which First Nations are entitled.
19. That the funding provided by the RCMs include criteria that are flexible enough to allow First Nations local governments to have access to it.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we do not want First Nations to form a separate category of reflection, as is the case in theme 5 of the consultation; rather, we are asking that they be made **an integral part of any decision, measure or action**.

To achieve this, several obstacles still need to be overcome. There is a strong need to establish **more links with the services provided by provincial and federal departments** to support the implementation, enhancement and expansion of First Nations services.

We must also emphasize the need to involve First Nations by **providing information and holding consultations prior** to any new measures or policies to give them the time necessary to coordinate funding with the federal government, and thus **avoid possible inequities with the province's non-First Nations population**. These measures and policies must be adapted to the specific reality of First Nations and foster a form of cultural safety. These observations call for the continued mobilization of leaders to **move beyond the compartmentalization** of levels, departments and organizations.

Fortunately, some promising models can be used to inform future initiatives. As such, we would like to emphasize the value of the **models of the Fonds Québécois d'initiatives sociales**, which we wish to see renewed. Similarly, we would like to see more **sustainable funding models**, compared to piecemeal calls for projects. This would improve the predictability of funding and thus build a more stable service offering, in addition to focusing on the services to ultimately improve them.

In short, it is important to go beyond merely updating public policies and take a real step towards reconciliation. This can be done by participating concretely in consolidating the social safety net and conditions for cultural development from which every Indigenous person in Quebec must benefit. This goes beyond providing funding opportunities – it is about considering the full extent of what culture represents in First Nations governance and recognizing how the fight against poverty and social exclusion can affect many spheres, including access to the land.

This step towards reconciliation is a key to First Nations moving from survival mode to prosperity.

APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Government of Quebec **respect the inherent right of First Nations to self-determination and cultural safety**, which implies recognition and respect for our institutions and areas of jurisdiction.
2. That the Government of Quebec develop an **action plan in consultation with First Nations to eliminate the systemic barriers under its jurisdiction that hinder them in the fight against poverty and social exclusion**.
3. That the Government of Quebec communicate its information to First Nations prior any new income security and employability measures or policies, and that it include means to reach all First Nations so that they can access the measures and programs that apply to them.
4. That the Government of Quebec formally commit to strengthening its relationship with First Nations to combat racism and discrimination, particularly in the labour market. A first step would be to contribute to the implementation of the AFNQL's *Action Plan on Racism and Discrimination*.
5. That the Government of Quebec respect the statements of commitment made in its Ministerial Strategy for Labour Market Integration of First Nations and Inuit People and ensure the implementation of all measures resulting from the Grand Economic Circle.
6. That provincial and federal authorities work with First Nations to develop a long-term investment plan to ensure the sustainable economic development of First Nations communities. That this funding be enhanced, recurring and distributed fairly among the communities, and not through a call for projects. That the conditions governing its management provide First Nations with the flexibility to meet their economic development needs and realities.
7. That the Government of Quebec, in consultation with First Nations and federal authorities, commit to resolving problems related to jurisdictional disputes to eliminate disparities between Quebec and First Nations social assistance beneficiaries.
8. That educational institutions under provincial jurisdiction provide more distance training tailored to the reality of communities or collaborate with First Nations organizations to create post-secondary programs and institutions in communities to prevent First Nations people from being forced to move to urban centres.
9. That the Government of Quebec recognize the importance of language and education are to the identity of First Nations and protect them, particularly through access to higher education in English for their people, and by no longer legislating on Indigenous languages without the consent of First Nations.
10. That the Government of Quebec respect the right to self-determination by respecting the laws adopted by local First Nations governments.
11. That the Government of Quebec respect the specific and full expertise of First Nations organizations in the areas of education, youth protection and the well-being of elders; collaborate fully on supporting more culturally and identity-sensitive programs; and adapt eligibility and accountability criteria to provide more flexibility and resources.
12. That the Government of Quebec participate in defining food security in partnership with First Nations to better understand the obstacles, in addition to proposing and implementing actionable solutions that meet the specific realities of First Nations.

13. That the Government of Quebec honour its commitment to connect the entire province of Quebec to high-speed Internet and make cellular connectivity accessible to all First Nations communities in Quebec.
14. That the provincial government work with First Nations and the federal government to find actionable solutions to jurisdictional issues limiting access to health and social services for First Nations, with the goal of establishing continuums of care that adhere to the principle of substantive equality.
15. That the Government of Quebec increase its collaborative efforts on the social and circular economy to provide the funding necessary for First Nations to develop social economy initiatives.
16. That the Government of Quebec provide support, including financial support, to raise awareness among businesses and organizations dedicated to economic, environmental, artistic or cultural development regarding the realities and cultural particularities of First Nations, and that this support be established in consultation with their organizations, the federal government and the provincial authorities.
17. That the Government of Quebec recognize the full importance of the fundamental rights, leadership and vision of First Nations regarding the protection of the territory, and that it increase its actions in terms of land and environmental protection, while paying particular attention to their needs.
18. That the Government of Quebec recognize the importance of dividing the territory based on remoteness and take this into account when delivering services to which First Nations are entitled.
19. That the funding provided by the RCMs include criteria that are flexible enough to allow First Nations local governments to have access to it.

VISION

First Nations individuals, families and communities are healthy, have equitable access to quality care and services, and are self-determining and culturally empowered.

MISSION

To accompany Quebec First Nations in achieving their health, wellness, culture and self-determination goals.



FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC
AND LABRADOR HEALTH
AND SOCIAL SERVICES
COMMISSION