

Editor's Introduction

Although it was not our intention, the international flavour of this, our tenth issue of the *Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development*, is undeniable. Interestingly the editorial team had for some time been debating the merits of producing a special issue focusing on international Aboriginal economic development issues. The following articles offer insight into the variety of economic issues currently confronting Indigenous peoples in Canada and Australia, while the following section's research note presents research conducted in Bangladesh among the Indigenous Garo community.

Drawing on their experiences working locally, nationally, and internationally, developing respectful protocols, and building relationships with Aboriginal women engaged in community development, Anna Hunter, Isobel Findlay, and Louise Clarke explore the ongoing contributions and persistent challenges of Aboriginal women's community development. Arguing that the threats of economic globalization are felt keenly by Aboriginal women and children, who are most often the ones at the bottom of the chain of development, little is being done to shore up these disparities. The authors specifically draw on their experiences related to their efforts to organize a workshop, conference, and research celebrating Aboriginal women's community development work. In particular, they focus on the multiple strategies women devise to negotiate what they identify as the structural impediments to Aboriginal women's community development, the latter of which remains critical to developing and maintaining healthy and sustainable communities.

Louis Evans of the Centre for Sustainable Mine Lakes at Australia's Curtin University of Technology reviews a number of initiatives aimed at assisting Aboriginal economic development through a careful examination of published data focusing on the impediments to Aboriginal enterprise development. In Australia Aboriginal economic development is being assisted through funding mechanisms

and consultations provided by Indigenous Business Australia, the Indigenous Land Corporation and other government agencies, as well as from the private sector, in particular the mining industry. Despite this assistance Evans argues that the major impediments to enterprise development tend to be overlooked, which include the lack of culturally appropriate business models and related cultural issues, lack of business skills and access to advice and, in the case of remote communities, the lack of access to markets and business services. Evans suggests a need to gravitate to international trends in capacity development that emphasize a systems-based, people-centred empowerment approach is required, and like issues and implications related to applying such an approach are analyzed and discussed.

Finally, an innovative article by Australian policy analyst David Worth examines the impact of fluctuating gasoline prices upon Australian Aboriginal communities dependent on petrol for their basic energy needs through the lens of peak oil. Arguing that the debate about rising petrol prices in Australia has focused mainly on Australians who live in urban areas, the parallel impact upon Indigenous Australians living in remote communities is often overlooked. Most of these small communities located throughout Australia use diesel fuel for their main power supply and for transportation. Further compounding these issues is the fact that many of these communities have developed economic plans based on tourism, and rely upon stable fuel prices if their initiatives are to be successful. This paper analyzes the future challenges of building viable and sustainable communities in remote Australia anticipating even higher world oil prices due to peak oil challenges, an issue the author suggests are likely to confront First Nations people living in remote regions of Canada.