



# governance toolkit

## best practices

**Principle:** Diversity of Revenue Sources  
**Government:** Ktunaxa Nation

### OPPORTUNITY

*The Ktunaxa people are located in the Kootenay region of British Columbia. The Ktunaxa Kinbasket Tribal Council's (KKTC) vision of sustainable development is to strive, as a self-sufficient, self-governing nation, to achieve a viable economy, to manage their lands and resources, and to support strong, healthy citizens.*

In 1910, the Canadian government constructed St. Eugene's Mission School. The facility was the first Indian "Industrial and Residential" school to be built in the Canadian West. Over time, the Mission instructed 5000 children. When it was closed in 1970 the Ktunaxa people worked to make the property contribute to their vision of self-reliance.

Following ten years of hard work, the result is a \$40-million business venture that generates significant economic benefits for the Ktunaxa people. St. Eugene's Golf Course opened in May 2000, the Casino of the Rockies in 2002, and the Resort Hotel in 2003. These diverse businesses created 250 new jobs (approximately 25% of employees are First Nations) and generate annual revenues of \$13.6 million.

### NCFNG

is a national, independent, First Nations-controlled organization dedicated to supporting First Nations as they work to implement their inherent right to self-governance. The development of a set of shared principles that clearly articulate our approach to effective governance is one way in which we support that work. This NCFNG Effective Governance Case Study profiles a best practice in the principle "Diversity of Revenue Sources".

To learn more about this case study, contact:  
Ktunaxa Nation  
[www.ktunaxa.org](http://www.ktunaxa.org)

To learn more about the NCFNG:  
[news@fngovernance.org](mailto:news@fngovernance.org)  
Toll free: 1 866 922 2052

The resort is owned and operated by SEM Resort Limited Partnership which is a consortium of Ktunaxa Nation, Samson Cree First Nation and Mnjikaning First Nation.

### PRINCIPLE IN ACTION

The KKTC began with an action plan that set out a framework for sustainable economic development. Leadership and administrators aggressively worked to negotiate partnerships and identified roles for all levels of governments, funding organizations, and other First Nations.

Ktunaxa sought the support of the community, re-affirmed community values and ensured that the political will existed to move forward to pursue their vision.

One of the first activities in the KKTC action plan for sustainable economic development was to identify and develop the potential of existing assets.

KKTC undertook an inventory of their assets and identified the skills, infrastructure, and resources already present within their communities. Chief Sophie Pierre identifies a set of critical assets that exist within most nations that must be engaged if the community is to achieve economic revitalization and create wealth.

- **People:** Your community members, with their knowledge, skill set, experience, and vision
- **Land:** Agriculture, residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, park use, etc.
- **Infrastructure:** Streets, roads, public facilities, docks, airports, dams, etc. and building structures including residential, commercial, industrial, government, offices, etc.
- **Plants and equipment:** Vehicles, plants, machinery, equipment, tools, capital goods
- **Intellectual property:** Copyrights, patents, trademarks, brands, licenses, etc.

## SUCCESS FACTORS

Chief Pierre applied the framework of the Harvard Project model of successful economic development of Native American tribes to Ktunaxa's vision. The most important factor for economic success of First Nations is sovereignty – the power to make your own decisions.

The second factor for success is “cultural match”. Chief Pierre explains, “We need to look within our organizations, people, and communities where we can learn and strengthen ourselves based on our traditions and our cultures.”

The third factor for economic success is the ability to effectively administer the affairs of the nation. It is essential that traditional knowledge is complemented by an understanding of economics, contemporary organizational systems, governance, and inter-government relations.

The fourth factor identified by the Harvard Project is stable leadership. The development of the resort by KKTC took a decade during which time the leadership remained committed, focused and driven by the shared vision of sustained economic benefit.

## CHALLENGES

KKTC had great success establishing St. Eugene's yet they experienced numerous challenges and barriers in completing the development. These included:

- While the KKTC was effective in obtaining financing for the commercial development through private investors, they were challenged in the process of obtaining funding from government. Their experiences were similar in dealing with both federal and provincial governments where approval processes were lengthy and cumbersome.
- A lack of knowledge related to on-reserve land management and complex commercial developments by the approving government agencies slowed the process.

**Our visions come from a very solid base; they come from our own traditions and our own cultures... Self-determination through economic self reliance works to reduce poverty.**  
— Chief Sophie Pierre

- Gaps between jurisdiction and authorities created instances where a federal authority does not exist or is in conflict with the provincial authority.
- The barriers and blocks set by the Indian Act continue to prevent or discourage the push for economic realization.

## NCFNG GOVERNANCE LESSONS LEARNED

*Expanding the Diversity of Revenue Sources* is critical to self-reliance. Historically, First Nations have depended on Canada to provide core funding for programs and services working within the narrow scope of the Indian Act and similar limited legislation. First Nations must reduce their dependency on any one funding source and work toward generating their own revenues. Leaders of the Ktunaxa Nation recommend a number of strategies that effectively support this principle.

Follow a holistic approach to investment that considers not only revenue but that social, cultural, environmental and economic sectors will work together to achieve the vision.

Target resources to outcomes at the individual and the family level, based on a growth model and appreciative inquiry method of community development. In such a model professionals manage and access resources from various sources, according to individual or family need.

Establish effective government to government relationships and service delivery agreements with other federal/provincial and private entities when it makes sense to do so – when they share the nation's vision; engage and educate them.

## LINKS AND MORE INFORMATION

Creating Wealth and Employment in Aboriginal Communities  
[www.aldervillefirstnation.ca/ecdev/files/CreatingWealthReport06.pdf](http://www.aldervillefirstnation.ca/ecdev/files/CreatingWealthReport06.pdf)

St. Eugene Golf Resort & Casino  
[www.steugene.ca](http://www.steugene.ca)

Rebuilding First Nations  
[www.cnpr.ca/Publications/CNPR%20-%20501708.pdf](http://www.cnpr.ca/Publications/CNPR%20-%20501708.pdf)

First Nation Success Stories  
[www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/bc/fnbc/sucsty/intr/fa02semr\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/bc/fnbc/sucsty/intr/fa02semr_e.html)