



# Synergos Consulting Services

## Case Study: Government: Community Health

Region: *Canada*; Sector: *Health*

### Social and Government Challenge: Improving the Health and Well-being of First Nations

*The project resulted in a replicable framework to engage Canada's First Nations, government and business in collaborative relationships to stimulate better community health and resiliency.*

Canadians enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living due to the considerable strides made towards advancing the health and prosperity of the Canada's citizens. However, most of native Canada's First Nations people are unable to experience or access a higher standard of living that most Canadians enjoy due to the accumulated trauma of cultural loss, failed programs and discrimination which has created complex social challenges and suffering in Aboriginal communities. Compared to fellow Canadians, Aboriginal people are impacted by higher rates of unemployment, educational failure, disease, violence, incarceration and conflict with the law. Not only did this create dislocation within Aboriginal communities, it signified lost opportunities for the country at large, as thousands of would-be entrepreneurs, workers, and producers continued to opt out.

For years, Canada's Federal and Provincial Governments have undertaken considerable initiatives to address challenges that Canadian Aboriginals face and pursue alternatives to conventional programs. Some programs have been successful, while others had not. Government and Aboriginal leaders concurred that many government assistance programs were not working. The debate and constructive discourse was not advancing due to a lack of trust, capacity and tolerance. The Federal and Provincial Government leaders were tasked to seek alternatives to conventional program design and delivery, as well as more effective engagement with the communities and business sector.

### Scope of Services

Synergos was an initiating partner and advisor to the Aboriginal Multi-Stakeholder Leadership Initiative along with Health Canada, the British Columbia Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, and Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council. Major resources were provided by Health Canada, Canada's federal department of health. The project has been implemented with three First Nation communities living along the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Synergos implemented the following stages of work:

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- **Program Design:** Synergos developed and facilitated a process with the initiating partners to create the basic programmatic infrastructure of the initiative. Applying its Partnership Lifecycle as the underlying template, Synergos enabled its' partners to develop a program that was community-driven, inclusive and results-driven.
- **Program Implementation:** Synergos provided counsel in support of the initiative's strategic growth and development. This entailed strategic alignment of community-based efforts in British Columbia to the national-level policy arena in Ottawa. Synergos also supported resource mobilization, corporate and philanthropic sector engagement, external communications, as well as evaluation.

## Results

The project resulted in a replicable framework to engage Canada's First Nations, government and business in collaborative relationships to stimulate better community health and resiliency. The external project evaluator, the New Economy Group, reported improved trust, respect and collaboration between participating First Nations and outside constituencies. This enabled communities to work more collaboratively together on a range of practical initiatives to help improve local income generation. An example initiative includes the establishment of an artisans market in the Tseshasht First Nation; program details are online at [www.weavingrelationships.org](http://www.weavingrelationships.org).

## About Synergos Consulting Services

Synergos Consulting Services partners with global corporations to build sustainable businesses and create social impact in the emerging markets of Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East.



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