

Prno, J. and B. Bradshaw (2008). Program evaluation in a northern, Aboriginal setting: Assessing Impact and Benefit Agreements. *Journal of Aboriginal Economic Development*, 6(1): 59-75.

**Abstract**

Over the past two decades, a number of Impact and Benefit Agreements (IBAs) have been established between mining firms and Aboriginal communities in support of some familiar projects across the Canadian North. Negotiated directly between mineral developers and Aboriginal communities with limited state interference, IBAs serve to manage impacts associated with the mine project and deliver tangible benefits to local communities. Notwithstanding their increasing use and potential significance, limited research has been undertaken to address a fundamental question - are they working? The dearth of research on IBA effectiveness is undoubtedly a function of its methodological complexity. In an effort to help overcome this challenge, this paper on the strategies employed to assess IBA effectiveness in two northern, Aboriginal locales. Drawing on insights from the program evaluation literature, the strengths and limitations of the field exercise are reflected upon with an aim of refining a procedure for future, more widespread use.