

Réseau des

SADC +CAE

Société
d'aide au développement
des collectivités et Centre
d'aide aux entreprises



AR

2022-2023

Table of Contents

RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE

- 03 Message from the Minister
- 04 Message from the President and the General Director
- 06 Economic impact
- 08 Our activities in brief
- 10 Sustainable development leadership
- 16 Local economic development :
dynhelping our regions thrive
- 18 Tourism recovery: SADCs and CAEs helping
small businesses improve their offer of services
- 20 Leveraging the employees and expertise of
SADCs and CAEs
- 22 Our Réseau
- 24 Helping SMEs go digital more quickly
- 26 Even more tools for our entrepreneurs
- 27 Going the extra mile for business succession
- 28 The Team

CAPITAL RÉSEAU

- 30 Message from the President
- 30 Message from the Treasurer
- 30 Action plan
- 31 Fund assets



**PASCALE
ST-ONGE**

The Honourable Pascale St-Onge, Minister of Sport
and Minister responsible for Canada Economic
Development for Quebec Regions

Message from the Minister

For 27 years now, CED has been able to count on the collaboration of the Réseau des SADC et CAE to support local businesses and projects helping to ensure growth and prosperity among all of Quebec's rural communities.

Each and every day, your professional and volunteer members contribute to local economic development by fostering, among other things, entrepreneurship, the next generation of entrepreneurs, innovation, and sustainable development.

Through your anchoring role in the regions, you are supporting Quebec's rural businesses and communities as they recover from the pandemic. I would like to highlight the agility, rigour, and speed you have demonstrated in this respect as you deploy your initiatives on the ground and respond to the needs of small businesses, with a view to successful sustained post pandemic growth that is green, inclusive, and to the benefit of all.

I thank all the members of your network, the committed professionals and volunteers who have been working for over 40 years for local economic development in our regions.

With you at our side, we will be able to continue to support innovative businesses and projects and thereby help build strong, inclusive, sustainable communities.

Message from the President and the General Director



**VALLIER
DAIGLE**

President
of the Réseau des SADC et CAE



**PASCAL
HARVEY**

General Director
of the Réseau des SADC et CAE

A strong, agile, engaged network

Entrepreneurs and rural communities showed enormous creativity and boldness this year, seizing the chance for economic recovery and tackling major challenges in the process, such as record increases in inflation and the persistent labour shortage. Our local economic development, coaching and financing services were all highly sought after. The Réseau and its members mobilized and rose to the occasion to meet these challenges with great agility and commitment. I am proud to present to you this annual report documenting the extent of our achievements. Day after day, our many regional and local efforts helped to create a more prosperous and sustainable economic environment.

Sustained, targeted measures to address issues facing entrepreneurs and communities

In addition to our regular services, this year we also offered new targeted measures focused on sustainable development, digital issues and tourism. These made a real difference for thousands of people all across Quebec! Our collaboration with Minister Pascale St-Onge and our top business partner, Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, is what made the difference and allowed us to increase our efforts. This is a long-term partnership that has grown even stronger with the rollout of the **Virage Vert** and the **Tourism Small Business Assistance Project** programs.

Under the Virage Vert, we distributed \$4.9 million in one year to 201 businesses and 120 sustainable community projects. And we're not done either—the project is set to keep going until 2024. On the tourism side, in under five months, we granted \$20 million in non-repayable contributions to 665 small businesses in the tourism sector to help them tailor their products and services to customers' needs.

We also got the chance to implement, in partnership with Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada Coordination (ISDEC), the **Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP)**. This program is currently being delivered all across Quebec, made possible by an amazing partnership with the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec.

Strength in numbers and collaboration

We cultivate our collective strength internally by leveraging our human resources every day. We held a series of training sessions and workshops on this issue to help us adopt best practices and become an employer of choice. We also strengthened internal communications by launching our brand-new intranet, La Station, a modern, user-friendly tool that helps make it easier for people to share their expertise with one another.

La Station marks the start of a new digital era for us. We need to adapt to the changing digital landscape, and these past few months have seen a number of related initiatives take flight. Other major projects will be developed over the course of next year.

The Réseau is also taking on an increasingly important role, thanks to our partnerships with the federal government and various stakeholders in Quebec's business ecosystem. As a key player in local economic development in Quebec, we deepened our partnerships with groups such as the Fédération québécoise des municipalités and the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ). We worked with the FCCQ

to deliver the CDAP and to implement the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project in record time. You'll note in this report that the Réseau is currently developing new measures to do even more when it comes to business succession and women entrepreneurs.

Thank you to our 400 professionals and over 600 volunteers!

All of us can be proud of what we've accomplished this past year—volunteers, partner professionals and our SADCs and CAEs. We collaborated and worked constructively together to support our entrepreneurs and grow our communities. We owe you our heartfelt thanks. Our dedication and commitment allowed us to make a difference in Quebec's rural and semi-rural areas.

Over the past months, we began the important step of renewing agreements with our funder. The close ties that our SADCs and CAEs have with their communities has enabled them to successfully deliver the program for over 40 years. Our impact, good relations and the current positive climate are all factors that will help us give the CFP fresh momentum, something that will benefit everyone in Quebec.

2022-2023

ECONOMIC

IMPACT



OVER \$92 MILLION

invested in Quebec's regions

OVER 10 000

entrepreneurs coached and financed

Thriving regions :

3.76 MILLION INVESTED

1,883

joint projects carried out

634

young entrepreneurs benefited from the Youth Strategy program

Small businesses in tourism :

\$20 MILLION

in non-repayable contributions

Virage Vert :

321

sustainable development projects carried out

Digital shift :

275

small businesses coached and financed

OVER \$76 MILLION

in assets with Capital Réseau

Our activities in brief

→ The Réseau's annual congress was held in Sept-Îles. Attendees explored the region, shared their expertise with one another, and participated in the annual general meetings of the Réseau des SADC et CAE and Capital Réseau.

Vallier Daigle, President of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, Annick Thibouthot, Executive Director of SADC Côte-Nord, Jane-Anne Cormier, Co-owner of Les vagues – Loisirs marins, Mirka Boudreau, President of Int-elle Corporation, and Serge Beauchemin, Managing Partner at AQC Capital



"We got more than just financing from SADC—we got extensive support. If it wasn't for the SADC, I'm not sure we'd still be around or that we would have been able to overcome all of the challenges we faced. You're helping us help our region thrive!"

– Jane-Anne Cormier, Les Vagues – Loisirs marins, Havre-Saint-Pierre.



Stéphane Lacroix, Director with Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions for Côte-Nord, Vallier Daigle, President of the Réseau des SADC et CAE and Paul Bouffard, Vice-President of SADC Côte-Nord



Annual general meetings of the Réseau and Capital Réseau in Sept-Îles

→ The Réseau participated as a partner in the 5TH RENDEZ-VOUS DU DEVELOPPEMENT LOCAL ET REGIONAL, organized by the Fédération québécoise des municipalités (FQM) in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré.

→ The 16 regional winners of the flexipreneur regional favourite prize from the Réseau des SADC et CAE given out as part of 24th OSEntreprendre Challenge, were unveiled.



→ The Réseau participated as a partner and jury member in the 24th edition of the OSEntreprendre Challenge's national gala.



→ The Réseau held its strategic retreat, with representatives from all of Quebec's regions in attendance.

→ The Réseau des SADC et CAE's semi-annual was held at the Lévis convention centre, where over 140 SADC and CAE professionals from across Quebec gathered to share their expertise with one another and attend talks and training workshops.

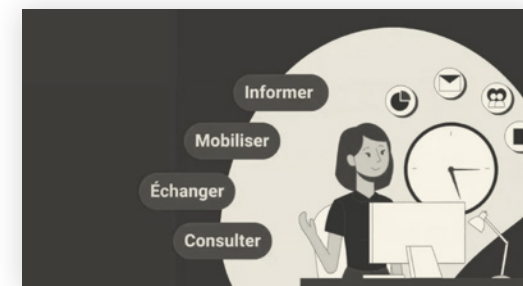
→ The SADC and CAE Presidents' Meeting was held.

→ The Canada Digital Adoption Program was launched at a Granby bookstore.



Charles Milliard, President and CEO of the FCCQ, Pascale St-Onge, Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, and Vallier Daigle, President of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, accompanied by the three owners of the Le repère youth bookstore, as well Andréanne Larouche, MP for Shefford, and Julie Bourdon, Mayor of Granby.

→ Our new intranet, La Station, was launched



→ The Tourism Small Business Assistance Project was announced in Mont Orford.



The Honourable Pascale Ste-Onge, Minister of Sport and Minister responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec, co-facilitated a panel on tourism, along with Pascal Harvey, General Director of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, and Charles Milliard, President and CEO of the FCCQ.

Among those in attendance were four tourism entrepreneurs from the region and a number of socioeconomic movers and shakers, including Jacques Demers, the Mayor of Sainte-Catherine-de-Hatley, Warden of the MRC de Memphrémagog, President of the Fédération québécoise des municipalités and member of the FQM Board of Directors; Dave Laveau, Executive Director of Indigenous Tourism Quebec; Réal Desautels, Executive Director of CAE Memphrémagog; and Louise Bourgault, Executive Director of the Chambre de commerce de Sherbrooke.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP

As front-line players in local economic development, SADCs and CAEs aim to create healthy living environments and help build a more responsible economy. For over 15 years, SADCs and CAEs have been helping companies leverage sustainable development approaches to become more competitive. We have a solid network, and to date nearly 1,500 businesses have benefitted from sustainable development coaching or participated in sustainable community projects led by an SADC or CAE.

Our professionals have unrivalled knowledge of sustainable development and green accounting, as well as an unparalleled familiarity with their communities and the challenges they face.

NO LIMITS: THE SD WORKING GROUP

The SD working group was created in 2008 by trailblazers in sustainable development in the Réseau, and ever since then, has never failed to grow and to provide concrete solutions and tools to improve the internal expertise of SADCs and CAEs. There are now **48 SADC and CAE members of the group**. Every year, the group gets together to receive training, share ideas, and develop projects and tools. They also tour businesses, such as Environek, a social economy enterprise specializing in recycling maple tubing systems.



Touring Environek

BETTER TRAINING OUR PROFESSIONALS

The Réseau used a special budget set aside under the Virage Vert to organize a training path on sustainable development coaching and responsible financing for all interested SADCs and CAEs. In total, **124 members of the Réseau will take six refresher trainings over the next year** with experts from the consulting firm Millani and the Centre de transfert technologique en écologie industrielle.

The Réseau launched studies to review sustainable development certification and to get a better picture of sustainable financing in Quebec so that we can strategically position ourselves and our coaching.

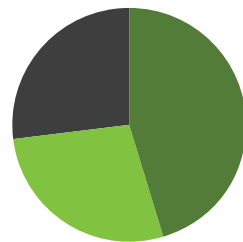
NEXT OBJECTIVE:
INTEGRATING NEW SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA INTO
SADC AND CAE FINANCING AND
COACHING ACTIVITIES

Virage Vert: A vital and popular program!

The Virage Vert has been in place for a little over a year and has been showing real results. The program allows SADC and CAE to help businesses and communities improve their environmental and economic performance by offering them the expertise they need!

Out of the \$9.5 million granted over three years by Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions, SADCs and CAEs invested **\$4.9 MILLION.**

MAIN ACTIVITIES



- 66 Optimizing energy consumption and energy efficiency
- 40 Managing waste
- 39 Analyzing potential GHG and carbon footprint reductions

Programme d'accélération du développement durable des régions du Québec

VIRAGE > VERT

HIGHLIGHTS

- SMEs showed that they are ready to go green, with just over half of SADCs and CAEs receiving more projects than were planned for in the program
- Virage Vert is seeing results, as 37% of projects came from new clients.
- 201 sustainable development coaching projects with SMEs, for a total investment of \$2,610,839.04.
- Average investment from SADCs and CAEs is \$12,504 per project.
- 120 joint sustainable development projects carried out, representing a total investment of \$1,589,160.96.
- On average, projects had a total value of \$58,008, including \$14,780 from SADCs and CAEs.
- 39% of projects were initiated by a SADC or CAE.

MAIN PROJECTS

47 studies, diagnostics and situation analyses

44 local initiatives and strategic projects

17 socioeconomic events and conferences

13 knowledge transfer activities

THANKS TO THE VIRAGE VERT, LOCAL PROJECTS FROM SADCs AND CAES GREW IN SCOPE, AS 14 SUCH PROJECTS BECAME REGIONAL INITIATIVES INVOLVING MULTIPLE SADCs AND CAES.

SADC de la région de Matane
SADC de la Matapédia
SADC de la Mitis
SADC de la Neigette
SADC de la MRC de Rivière-du-Loup
SADC de Témiscouata
SADC du Kamouraska

The first provincial symposium on sustainable agriculture

When a region's SADCs all come together to organize an event, it's sure to be a success! That's just what the SADCs in Bas-Saint-Laurent did with the Virage Vert program, organizing the very first sustainable agriculture symposium on the theme of profitable investment. Farmers, advisors, scientists and other socioeconomic stakeholders got to learn more about sustainable agriculture, attending around 30 talks and workshops on topics such as the circular economy.

How can waste recovery be profitable for farmers? The symposium helped answer this question, showcasing role model businesses in sustainable agriculture: the winners of the recent contest "Une vitrine sur les bons coups en agriculture durable."

"Doing sustainable agriculture isn't like baking a pastry. There's no specific recipe you can follow. [...] Once you take a step back in your business and start thinking about the land—in my book, you're doing sustainable agriculture. You start asking yourself questions, and with those questions, you change your approach. You end up doing better, yes for your company's financial health, but also for yourself as a person and for the environment around you."

– Jean-François Rioux, Ferme Rioukioux

SADC de la Matapédia

Entrepreneurs: Miguel Marcoux and Francis Marcoux of Apexways

Biomimetics: finding inspiration in nature

Apexways is a family business in Matapédia that makes technical sport apparel, outdoor apparel and high-quality accessories. Since 2018, its mission has been to help others perform and reach the summit—at their own pace. Sustainable development is key to the business. Looking for ways to improve their products, the young entrepreneurs turned to the SADC de la Matapédia for assistance.



Under the Virage Vert program, the owners of Apexways were able to talk to an expert who helped them find an innovative biomimetics solution that could replace raw material from the petrochemical industry used in clothing manufacturing. Initial replacement tests were conclusively positive, and as an added bonus, the new fibre could be grown locally, which helped the business diversify and lower its GHG emissions from transportation. Virage Vert has been a clear help to Apexways in developing its brand while leaving no trace!

SADC des Sources

Entrepreneur: Pierre-Olivier Gouin of ABS REMORQUES INC

Reducing waste through robotization



ABS Trailers, a company that designs, manufactures and delivers premium live bottom trailers, is using robotization to deliver on sustainable development. The company has been struggling with a skilled labour shortage, and drew on the help of SADC des Sources to speak to an expert to help them implement a sustainable robotization project. The project is almost ready and will improve the company's production capacity and increase both work quality and consistency. This will mean a significant reduction in emissions and resource waste. There's a green light at the end of the tunnel!

CAE Montmagny-L'Islet

From inspiration to action

Before entrepreneurs can go green, they often need a better understanding of the issues. It was for this reason that CAE Montmagny-L'Islet worked with a number of partners to organize the sustainable development forum *S'inspirer pour passer à l'action* for the region's businesses.

This conference was the first step of a longer process to raise entrepreneurs' awareness of the 12 strategies of the circular economy, specifically product life cycle assessment and material flow accounting (MFA).

There, business owners attended talks and a panel of inspiring entrepreneurs, and participated in networking workshops and an original treasure hunt activity related to waste.

And things aren't stopping there! At the end of the event, the CAE confirmed that participants were keen on digging deeper into the day's themes. The CAE will now launch a business cohort that is eager to integrate these concepts, with which they are now familiar.

58 attendees to several activity area.

31 companies, industries and organizations present, including **8** from the municipal world.

50 offers, **28** requests and **25** potential synergies identified.

Sustainable Recovery Cohort extended

The Sustainable Recovery Cohort was established in 2021 by the Réseau des SADC et CAE with financial support from the Fonds Écoleader to help SMEs adopt green business practices. Specifically, the project allows SMEs to receive a non-repayable financial contribution they can use to pay for expert services in drafting an action plan and coaching on how to integrate their new business practices.

Good news! The Fonds Écoleader recently agreed to extend this project until December 2023, which will add a dozen new businesses to the cohort!

To date:

47 businesses have received sustainable development support from a SADC or CAE or specialized consultant.

This support represents the integration of **200** new green actions.

Business owners Martin and Dominique wanted to build a solid future. That's why they sought the help of SADC Papineau-Collines to come up with effective measures and develop an action plan that would strengthen their environmental and economic efforts.



- Calculating GHG emissions and offsets
- Planning preventive facility maintenance
- Managing waste

« We went from ideas to actions because SADC has structured our sustainable development approach. »

– Dominique Laflamme and Martin Poitras, HOM Mini Chalet

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Helping our regions thrive

For nearly 40 years, we have placed the utmost importance on local economic development. This year, our SADCs and CAEs carried out over 1,500 projects across Quebec, and we couldn't be prouder!

"LIM"ITLESS COMMUNITY IMPACTS

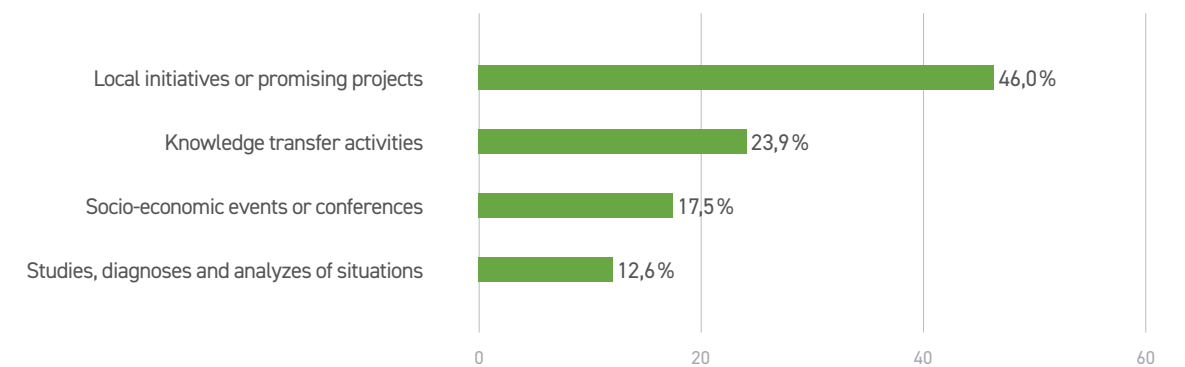
The LIM (local intervention measure) is the special SADC and CAE program dedicated to community development projects.

Through the LIM, SADCs and CAEs invested \$2.5 million this year in 389 joint projects, primarily focused on promoting business development, creating or retaining high-quality jobs, tackling the labour shortage and helping keep people from leaving our regions.

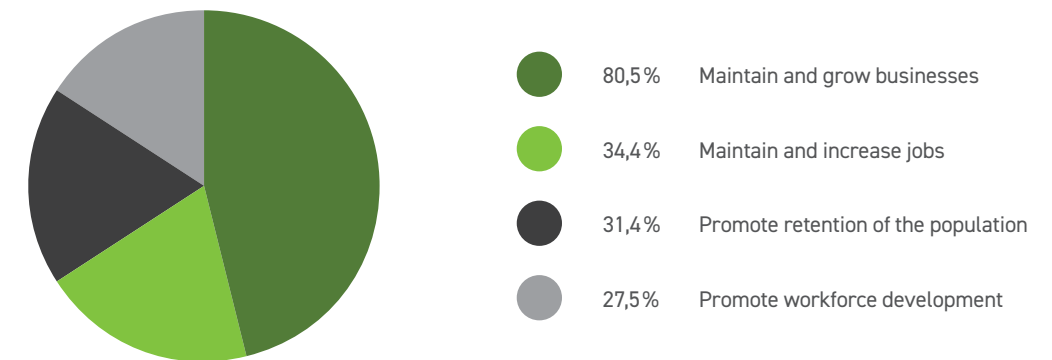
SADCs and CAEs help our regions thrive, especially by mobilizing key stakeholders around major economic issues and focusing on skill upgrades. The LIM helped SADCs and CAEs cover professional fees to complete projects, nearly half of which were led by SADC and CAE development officers. Most efforts were focused on entrepreneurs, women or youth.

SADC and CAE demonstrated leadership in their communities that went a long way thanks to the LIM and had an enormous multiplier effect. 380 projects were completed, with the total investment from SADCs, CAEs and their partners assessed at \$10 million. Now that's a program that's engaging people to help our communities!

EFFORTS



ECONOMIC OBJECTIVES



Tourism recovery

SADCS AND CAES HELPING SMALL BUSINESS IMPROVE THEIR OFFER OF SERVICES

In the regions, tourism was the industry the most heavily affected by the pandemic. That's why the Government of Canada established a measure to help SMEs in this sector seize the opportunity for recovery by adapting their offer of services.

In December 2022, the government granted \$40 million to the Réseau des SADC et CAE and the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) to deliver the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project.

The trick was how to quickly and carefully distribute non-repayable contributions all across Quebec.

67 SADCS and CAEs worked tirelessly hand in hand with partners from the regional tourism ecosystem to implement the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project to great success.

\$20 MILLION

invested in

665

small tourism businesses in rural areas.



SADC du Haut-Saint-François

La Cabane chez Arthur: seats for everyone!

The non-repayable contribution from the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project helped La Cabane chez Arthur in Cookshire-Eaton add 25 more seats to its dining room. Do we even need to tell you that every one of these new seats found a taker during the sugaring season? What's more, La Cabane chez Arthur can now respond to the higher demand by offering weekday services, something it couldn't do in the past. More people than ever enjoy the extra space of the newly expanded dining room.

With help from PAPETR, La Cabane chez Arthur expanded their lobby and cloakroom and built a new shop to showcase their maple products and small meals cooked on site.

The owners say that their maple products are flying out the door, not just because more people are visiting La Cabane chez Arthur, but also thanks to the greater visibility their products are receiving.



SADC de Nicolet-Bécancour

A more accessible Musée de la biodiversité

The Musée de la biodiversité in Bécancour, which showcases natural heritage conservation, used the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project to redesign, modernize and overhaul its shop and reception. The centre receives over 28,000 visitors a year, and the pandemic put in stark relief the fact that the facility's entrances were awkward, unsafe and uncomfortable for young families visiting the centre.

The sales area will have a better layout and design for customers with reduced mobility, and it will be more profitable and able to offer more products. PAPETR lent the Musée de la biodiversité a vital helping hand.



Leveraging the employees and expertise of SADCs and CAEs

The labour shortage continues to vex our regions, and our organizations are not exempt. We are used to helping our clients find solutions and implement initiatives to overcome these challenges, but this year, we doubled down on our efforts to retain and attract professionals in our SADCs and CAEs. We leveraged our expertise and human resources to find solutions.

PEOPLE, A KEY STRENGTH

At the request of SADCs and CAEs, the Réseau launched a series of actions this year to better train and equip team managers. The first item on the action plan was an initial virtual conference on human resources, where speakers would give inspiring talks and share best practices. The success of this symposium led to a training path on human resources tailored to our organization.

The Réseau hired a specialty human resources firm to carry out a total compensation review and develop tools to help SADCs and CAEs better and more easily manage their human resources.

Internal communications were also improved by the rollout of our new modern and user-friendly intranet, which makes it easier to distribute information and share expertise with others.

SADC AND CAE MANAGERS ARE NOW BETTER INFORMED AND EQUIPPED TO ATTRACT NEW EMPLOYEES AND KEEP THEIR PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES ENGAGED!



A strong and unique Network present in all regions of Quebec for more than 40 years

OUR RÉSEAU

For over 40 years, the Réseau has brought together 57 SADCs and 10 CAEs, which strive to support economic development in Quebec's regions. We have 400 professionals and over 600 volunteers implementing the Community Futures Program (CFP) in Quebec's regions, supporting and financing more than 10,000 entrepreneurs and 1,000 local economic development projects annually. The CFP is a federal program that recognizes the expertise of local decision makers and decision-making autonomy, in order to encourage communities to take charge of their futures. There are also 269 funded CFDCs and CBDCs implementing the CFP across the rest of the country.



MISSION OF THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE

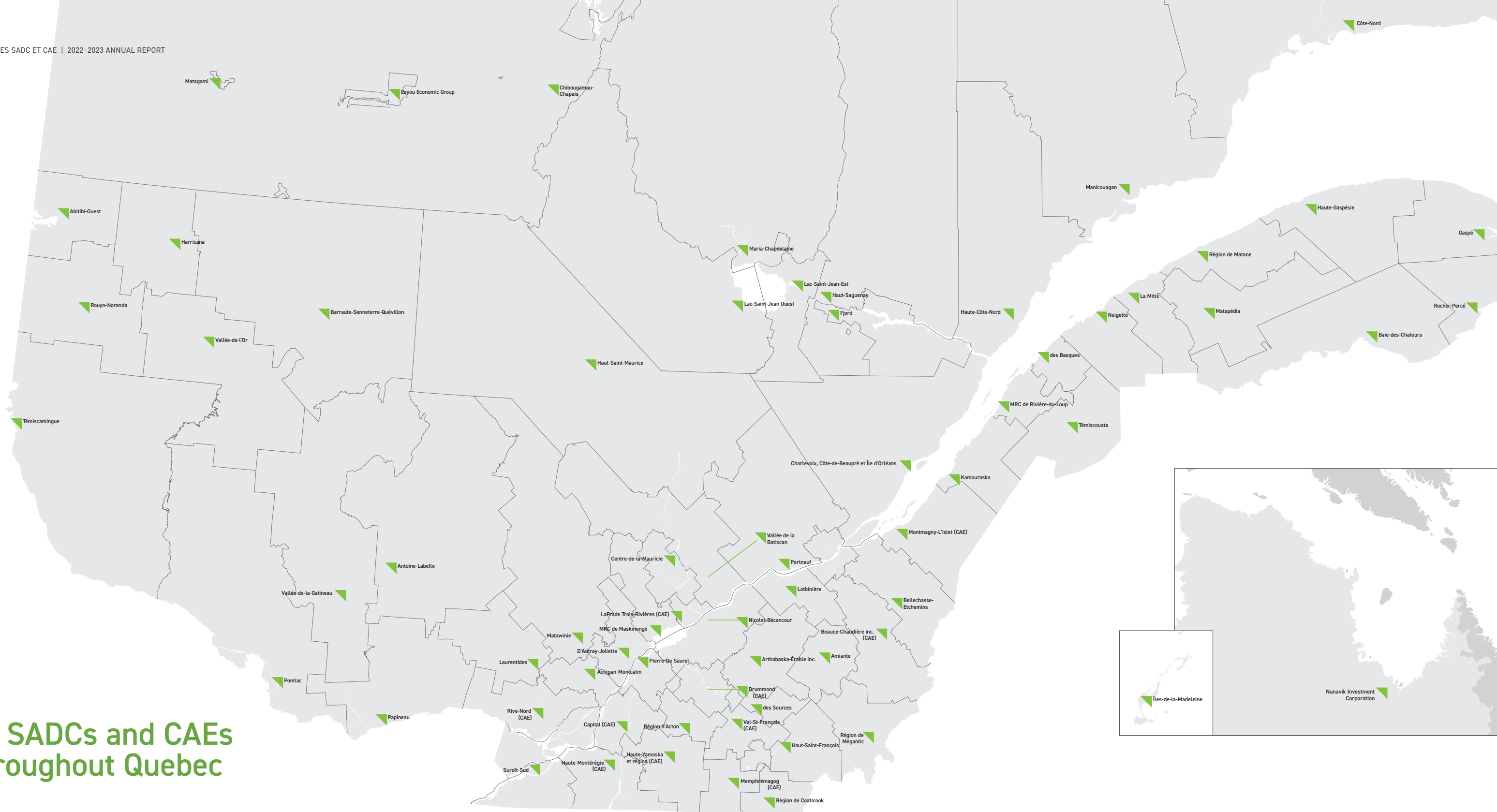
Act as the focal point for SADCs and CAEs in promoting and defending their interests, and in sharing and developing expertise and innovative tools to ensure the development objectives of their communities are achieved.

VISION

Be recognized as a key local economic development partner for our communities.

HISTORICAL REACH

- + 63,000 unique visitors to our website, an increase of 60%;
- + 40,000 subscribers to our Facebook pages;
- 1,482 Twitter followers;
- 900 LinkedIn followers.



67 SADCs and CAEs throughout Quebec

ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

SADC Abitibi-Ouest
SADC Barraute-Senneterre-Quévillon
SADC du Témiscamingue
SADC Harricana
SADC Rouyn-Noranda
SADC Vallée-de-l'Or

BAS-SAINT-LAURENT

SADC de la Matapédia
SADC de la Mitis
SADC de la MRC de Rivière-du-Loup
SADC de la région de Matane
SADC de Témiscouata
SADC des Basques
SADC Kamouraska
SADC Neigette

CAPITALE-NATIONALE

SADC Charlevoix, Côte-de-Beaupré, Île d'Orléans
SADC Portneuf

CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES

CAE Beauce-Chaudière
SADC Bellechasse-Etchemins
SADC de l'Amiante
SADC Lotbinière
CAE Montmagny-L'Islet

CÔTE-NORD

SADC Côte-Nord
SADC Haute-Côte-Nord
SADC Manicouagan

ESTRIE

SADC des Sources
SADC Haut-Saint-François
CAE Memphrémagog
SADC région de Coaticook
SADC région de Mégantic
CAE Val-St-François

GASPÉSIE-LES-ÎLES-DE-LA-MADELEINE

SADC Baie-des-Chaleurs
SADC de Gaspé
SADC de la Haute-Gaspésie
SADC des Îles-de-la-Madeleine
SADC Rocher-Percé

LAURENTIDES / LANAUDIÈRE

SADC Achigan-Montcalm
SADC Antoine-Labelle
SADC de d'Autray-Joliette
SADC des Laurentides
SADC Matawinie
CAE Rive-Nord

MAURICIE-CENTRE-DU-QUÉBEC

SADC Arthabaska-Érable
SADC de la MRC de Maskinongé
SADC du Haut-Saint-Maurice
CAE LaPrade Trois-Rivières
SADC Nicolet Bécancour
SADC Shawinigan
SADC Vallée-de-la-Batiscan

MONTÉRÉGIE

CAE Capitale
CAE Drummond
CAE Haute-Montérégie
CAE Haute-Yamaska et Région
SADC Pierre-De Saurel
SADC Saint-Hyacinthe Acton
SADC Suroît-Sud

NORD-DU-QUÉBEC

SADC Chibougamau-Chapais
SADC Matagami
Eeyou Economic Group
Nunavik Investment Corporation

OUTAOUAIS

SADC Papineau-Collines
SADC Pontiac CFDC
SADC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau

SAGUENAY-LAC-SAINT-JEAN

SADC du Fjord
SADC du Haut-Saguenay
SADC Lac-Saint-Jean Est
SADC Lac-Saint-Jean-Ouest
SADC Maria-Chapdelaine

Helping SMEs go digital more quickly



IMPLEMENTING THE CANADA DIGITAL ADOPTION PROGRAM

Our world is increasingly dominated by digital issues and based on digital technologies. To stay competitive, our businesses must adapt. The Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development asked the Réseau and the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) to implement the Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP).

The CDAP covers SMEs of all sizes and in all industries, and has two components:

- **A team of e-commerce advisors** who can work with SMEs to help businesses in all of the province's administrative regions receive coaching services and carry out a 360 diagnostic.
- **\$2,400 micro-grants** for e-commerce development to help businesses and entrepreneurs lower the cost of implementing e-commerce projects and expand their online customer base.

"I know what it takes to go digital, but I don't know how to do it. Thanks to the program's grants, I can find professionals who will explain it to me and coach me through the process. I much prefer giving my clients my full attention, supported by digital experts, rather than trying to juggle everything all by myself."

– Anne-Sophie Michel, ASM Consultants



This year:

260 e-commerce advisors were hired as part of the Canada Digital Adoption Program to help SMEs go digital.

With this coaching, **275** businesses invested a total of **\$645,144**.

HELPING DIGITALLY TRANSFORM REGIONS WITH CO^{lab} INNOVATION SOCIALE ET CULTURE NUMÉRIQUE

The Réseau des SADC et CAE collaborated on the COlab Plus Numérique pilot project to strengthen and enhance the capacities of socioeconomic actors to support SME's digital projects, developing their knowledge and skills with regard to digital issues and the digital economy.

An initial Plus Numérique learning path for business advisors in SADCs, CAEs, RCMs and CLDs in the regions of Côte-Nord, Mauricie, Nord-du-Québec and Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean have been launched and about 10 SADC's CAE's had participated. Good news: this project will be available all over Québec 'regions. For more information: plus-numerique.ca



← At the launch of the Canadian Digital Adoption Program with the Honorable Pascale St-Onge.

Even more tools for our entrepreneurs

A PERSONAL TOUCH THAT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Professional consulting is a key service that SADCs and CAEs provide to entrepreneurs, complementing their financing. This assistance can sometimes be intangible and the business doesn't always end up taking a loan, but it is still appreciated by clients and has a major impact.

Every year, we take care to ask how satisfied entrepreneurs are with our services. This year, we found that:

- The overall level of entrepreneur satisfaction with our services is 98%.
- Clients said that the help they received from SADCs and CAEs **improved their business's profitability in 73% of cases!**
- Nearly 70% of entrepreneurs said that the assistance they received helped them create or maintain new jobs, **increased their sales (67%)** and **improved their management or business practices (78%)**, in the case of technical assistance.

Our services also encouraged youth to stay in the regions, as 15% of young entrepreneurs that we supported with the Youth Strategy said that they would have probably left the region if their business project hadn't come to fruition.



"My business is taking flight, and I need to find ways to boost my boot production. SADC Côte-Nord suggested the Accelerated Growth Service, and I couldn't be more grateful. The program helped me save time, find the right person to support me at the right moment and guided me to the right place so I could get what I wanted faster."

– Josée Leblanc, Atikuss

ACCELERATING BUSINESS INNOVATION

A new partnership was forged this year with Innovation Canada. After Innovation Canada conducted a successful pilot project with a number of SADCs and CAEs to give their business clients easier access to Innovation Canada's Accelerated Growth Service (AGS) program, the agency made SADCs and CAEs recognized partners so that they can deliver their services all across Quebec.

We're proud to offer this premium service to SMEs with a strong growth potential in the regions!

ROAD TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP: VALUABLE ADVICE FOR SMES

The improved version of the Road to Entrepreneurship, uploaded in February 2022, is always being updated. Content for small businesses in the regions is published every month and new tools are being planned for next year.

It's a promising project!

Going the extra mile for business succession

Business succession is an evergreen issue in our communities. That's why the réseau is continuing its youth strategy and deepening its role with new efforts to stimulate business start-ups. How? By relying on flexipreneurship and emphasizing collaboration with key stakeholders.

YOUTH STRATEGY

Business succession has always been important to the Réseau. We've been implementing the Youth Strategy since 1997, when it was established in collaboration with Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions. This strategy is a way for us to try and convince youth to become entrepreneurs.

- In total, we helped over 13,000 youth aged 39 and under start or acquire a business.
- In total, SADCs and CAEs invested \$167.5 million, with a multiplier of effect of 1 to 6.44 and a total investment of \$165 million.
- \$12.5 million invested with 634 young entrepreneurs.

BOOSTING PART-TIME WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

Do you know about flexipreneurship? Maybe not, because it's not a popular discussion topic in Quebec. However, it is a growing phenomenon, especially among women.

Flexipreneurs have a part-time or even full-time job in addition to their business. They have many spinning plates up at once: they might be in school, or on parental leave, or acting as a caregiver for a loved one or doing seasonal work.

Our Réseau and the SADC de Shawinigan are currently exploring ways to create custom coaching and financing and stimulate project development for this emerging clientele. Next year will see a number of developments on this front!



« I learn to knowing gently the middle of business and I take experience without pressure from performance. »

– Julie Bérubé, Enraciné

Part-time women entrepreneurs did not consider themselves entrepreneurs under the definition used in Quebec, especially in terms of risk-taking and long hours.

As a result, they hesitated to ask for assistance from organizations like SADCs and CAEs, which are there to help them with their projects*.

* Taken from a study conducted by the SADC and financed by Women and Gender Equality Canada between 2018 and 2021 on part-time entrepreneurship

The Team

BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS

- VALLIER DAIGLE, President, Bas-Saint-Laurent
- LINE ST-AMOUR, Vice President, Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- RAYMOND CIMON, Treasurer, Chaudière-Appalaches
- AURÈLE DOUCET, Secretary, Gaspésie/Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- STÉPHANE LEGRAND, Administrator, Montérégie
- GERMAIN GRENON, Administrator, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
- JEAN-SERGE ROCHON, Administrator, Outaouais
- MARTINE PAIEMENT, Administrator, Laurentides-Lanaudière
- JEAN LAROCHE, Administrator, Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec
- NATHALIE SIMARD, Administrator, Côte-Nord
- MICHEL PATRY, Administrator, Nord-du-Québec
- SERGE GOSSELIN, Administrator, Estrie

THE STANDING COMMITTEE

- FRANCIS DUMAIS, Abitibi-Témiscamingue
- ANNIE FOURNIER, Bas-Saint-Laurent
- MARIE-CHRISTINE PERRON, Côte-Nord
- MARC GRIMARD, Estrie
- DAVE LAVOIE, Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine
- JONATHAN LANDREVILLE, Laurentides-Lanaudière
- PIERRE CLOUTIER, Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec
- NATHALIE DUBORD et MIRETTE TIANI, Montérégie
- RHONDA PERRY, representative of the executive directors, Outaouais
- LAURENCE MONTREUIL, observer on the Board of Administrators, Chaudière-Appalaches
- JEAN-FRANÇOIS LALIBERTÉ, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
- ANNIE POTVIN and LAURA LANDREVILLE, Nord-du-Québec

CAPITAL RÉSEAU BOARD OF ADMINISTRATORS

- RAYMOND CIMON, President, SADC de l'Amiante
- RÉAL TURGEON, Vice-President SADC de Lotbinière
- JEAN-CLAUDE LAROCQUE, Treasurer, SADC de la Neigette
- NATHALIE DALLAIRE, Secretary, SADC d'Antoine-Labelle
- JOCELYN LÉVESQUE, Administrator, SADC Rouyn-Noranda

THE RÉSEAU TEAM

- PASCAL HARVEY, General Director
- MARIE-PIER BÉDARD, Executive Assistant
- PIERRE-OLIVIER COLAS, Director, Partnerships and Strategic Development
- DOMINIQUE CÔTÉ, Director, Human Resources and Compliance, and Coordinator of Capital Réseau
- JOLIN FERLAND, Director, Technology and Training
- NATHALIE NOLET, Director, Administration
- CHRISTINE PILOTE, Director, Communications
- ANNIE POMERLEAU, Director, Programs
- ÉDITH CORBEIL, Project Manager, Virage Vert

GOVERNANCE

2023-2024 strategic directions

01. MAINTAIN AND REINFORCE COHERENCE AND SOLIDARITY WITHIN THE RÉSEAU
02. REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT WITH RESPECT TO COMMUNITY ISSUES
03. ENSURE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COMMUNITY FUTURES PROGRAM
04. MAINTAIN AND INCREASE AWARENESS OF OUR ACTIVITIES
05. MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN OUR CREDIBILITY



Our financial vehicle

OVER \$76 MILLION IN ASSETS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES.



Message from the President

**RAYMOND
CIMON**

Over the past year, we focused our attention on Capital Réseau's planning for the future, and on delivering the Tourism Small Business Assistance Project.

I'd like to introduce these projects by highlighting the work of the volunteers and permanent employees who worked tirelessly to advance them.

The steering committee was tasked with making a series of recommendations to the Capital Réseau Board of Administrators on new forms of governance and stewardship, as well as the creation of a special fund, taking into account the expected money from the reimbursement of RRRF loans.

Capital Réseau's administrators were extremely busy and had to meet each week from January to March in order to confirm the compliance of the projects submitted under the Projet d'aide aux petites entreprises touristiques rurales.

For the first time, our members worked to deliver a government initiative to a target client base.

In the end, 665 rural tourism businesses were able to benefit from PAPETR. This project was a collaboration with the Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec, which handled implementation in urban areas.

Yet again, Capital Réseau was the vehicle chosen by Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions to help rural and semi-urban businesses.

Capital Réseau is more vibrant than ever, and the work being done to create a future for the organization demonstrates a desire for renewal and modernization.



Message from the Treasurer

**JEAN-CLAUDE
LAROCQUE**

In the fiscal year ending March 31, 2023, Capital Réseau's assets were valued at \$161 million. Member equity alone accounts for near than 50% of these total assets and reached \$76,5million, a significant increase of around 5% over the previous year. The interest rate applied to member investments and loans remained at a very attractive level. Member investments outpaced loans issued, resulting in a decrease in investment income and a rate of return of 4,25 %, a very slight increase over the end of the previous year. Nevertheless, Capital Réseau continues to offer a significantly better return than the financial market for term deposits. There were also regular activities such as the interest rebate measure on Youth Strategy loans, which remained a very popular program. 37 members, including 5 CAEs, benefited over the past year. In addition, 57 loans were issued, for a total of \$ 20 769 000 (24 loans issued from the regular fund for a total of \$15 265 000 and 33 loans from the Youth Strategy fund for a total of \$5 504 000).

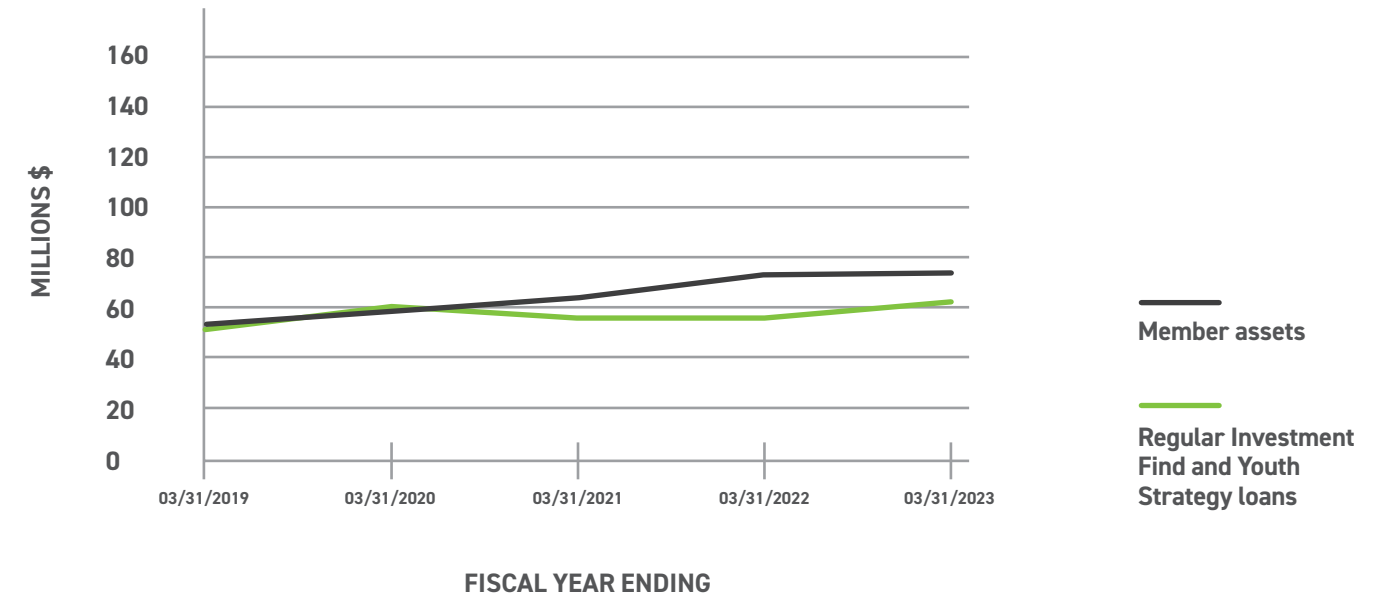
2023-2024 ACTION PLAN

- Continue delivering the RRRF
- Continue serving members and improving investment and borrowing conditions
- Explore new capitalization methods
- Continue a collective reflection on the future of Capital Réseau
- Maintain the interest rebate terms for the Youth Strategy
- Develop special funds
- Explore partnerships and develop financial alliances
- Set up an endowment fund to finance special projects
- Apply the real operational costs of Capital Réseau
- Ensure the proper management of contracts

Fund Assets

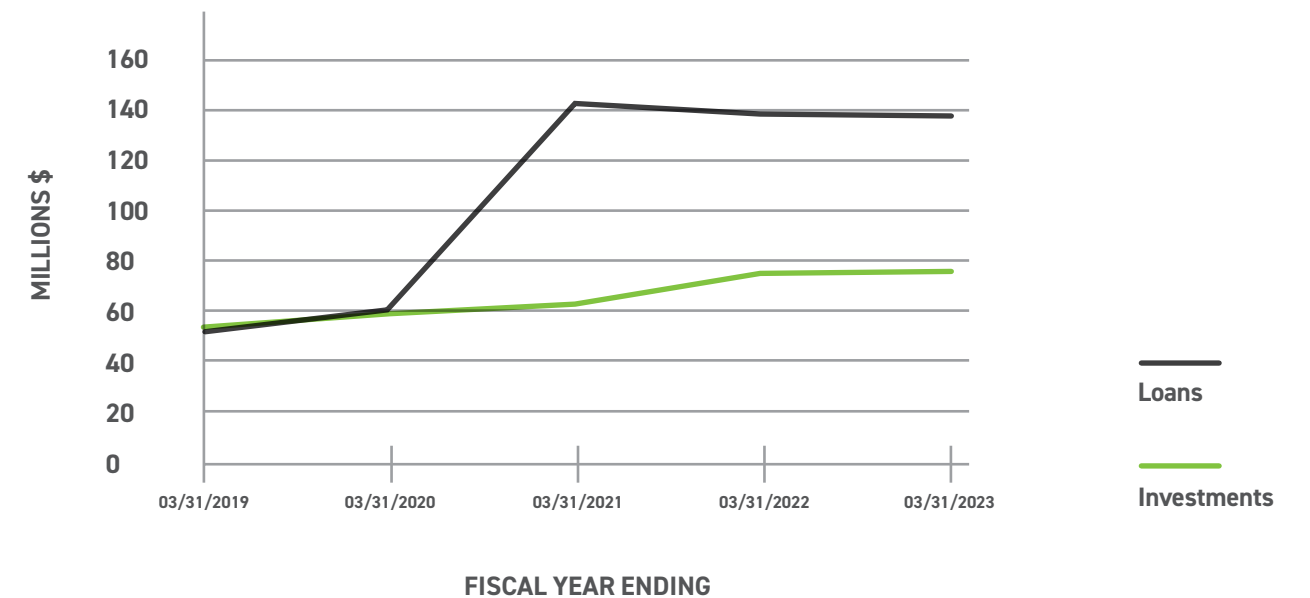
CAPITAL RÉSEAU

Assets and regular loans - changes over 5 years



CAPITAL RÉSEAU

Loans and investments - change over 5 years



40 years
of experience

67 SADCs and CAEs
throughout Quebec

Over
1,000 volunteers
and professionals

sadc-cae.ca

Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions offer a financial support to the SADC and CAE



Canada Economic
Development
for Quebec Regions

Développement
économique Canada
pour les régions du Québec