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ANNUAL REPORT

THE COOPERATIVE, A MISUNDERSTOOD BUSINESS MODEL

The Québec government capitalizes on the fact that the UN has proclaimed 2012 the International Year of Cooperatives and proposes, in its 2012-2013 budget, new measures to support the development of cooperatives in Québec, including the Fonds de co-investissement COOP, whose mission is to invest in new cooperatives during pre-startup and startup phases.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS

During the past year, a lot of energy and creativity has been expended by the Réseau des SADC et CAE, supported by the expertise of the communications firm Ig2, to present a new, distinctive brand image for CFDCs and CBDCs. This image will represent the new vision of CFDCs and CBDCs as "leaders and pioneers in the diversification of communities in a sustainable manner."

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Réseau des
**SADC
+CAE**

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

**STRATÉGIE
JEUNESSE**
PROJET
ENTREPRISE

Depuis qu'il a
bénéficié
DEVENIR
Ce rêve
en leur assu

6000
ENTREPRENEURS

10 000 \$

Depuis les quatorze dernières
années, 25% des jeunes aidés
étaient sans emploi.



At the press briefing for the launch of the operation in Rivière-du Loup, on January 27. From left to right: Mr. Gilles Goulet, SADC de la MRC de Rivière-du-Loup, Mr. Robin Tremblay, Entrepreneuriat Québec, Ms. Hélène Deslauriers, Executive Director of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, and Mr. François Charron.

CONNECT!

One of the successes of the past year was undoubtedly Operation Branchons les PME du Québec, which CFDCs and CBDCs launched by partnering with François Charron, the Web columnist for the daily show *Salut, bonjour!* Mr. Charron, having been spokesman for Camp Je in 2008, knows the Réseau well and found that CFDCs and CBDCs were the best vehicles for making Québec SMEs aware of the importance of integrating communication technologies.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

▼ Denis Lebel

Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities and Minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec



The Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) and the Réseau des SADC et CAE have been working in economic development in the regions of Quebec for over 30 years. This report highlights the achievements and initiatives put in place by the Réseau and its members over the past year.

The Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec has contributed to the achievements outlined in this report through the Community Futures Program (CFP). This national program concretely promotes the vitality of communities and the development of Quebec's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as access to capital, advisory services, and support for local projects by building on the diversification of regional economies, particularly in rural areas.

That is why 2011 marked the renewal of the Agency's financial support to the CFDCs, CBDCs, Réseau des SADC et CAE and Capital Réseau des SADC et CAE (Common Fund) for the next five years. This new agreement will benefit all the regions of Quebec by helping communities thrive and SMEs, the drivers of our economy, become even more efficient, innovative and competitive.

I would like to recognize the work of the 1,350 volunteers and 400 Réseau professionals who contribute to community development. This annual report proves it and the 9,300 or so businesses and organizations receiving services from a CFDC or CBDC every year could attest to it as well.

9,300

OR SO BUSINESSES AND ORGANIZATIONS RECEIVING SERVICES FROM A CFDC OR CBDC EVERY YEAR

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

▼ Pierre Marois / Chairperson

▼ Hélène Deslauriers / Executive Director

The year 2011–2012 arguably marks the beginning of a new era for the Réseau des SADC et CAE. A five-year agreement with Canada Economic Development, more autonomy for our boards in using investment funds, an updated brand, capital for businesses and exciting and innovative projects enable us to see the future with enthusiasm.

The year—already positive as of April 2011—was filled with extremely fruitful unexpected events. Today, we want to emphasize the adaptability of our teams, and we want to congratulate them.

The unplanned rebranding that our communications firm lg2 convinced us to adopt has rapidly raised widespread enthusiasm among members. We can be proud of the results. Our trademark, this little vibrant-green triangle, signifies success, according to lg2, and it is already creating talk and raising many positive comments.

Another unplanned flagship project for the year was François Charron's speaking tour about the urgent need for Québec SMEs to properly connect to the Web and participate in online commerce. It gave us unusual visibility, which we were not used to. In addition to being enjoyable, the project has undoubtedly strengthened the position of CFDCs and CBDCs as major players among entrepreneurs in adopting new technologies.



2011 2012

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ERA FOR THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE

The year included another strong position—supporting businesses and communities in sustainable development initiatives. Many innovative projects are taking place right now among our members. The project bringing together 27 CFDCs and CBDCs with the Éco-Conseil (Eco-advising) Chair from the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi to help businesses comply with the standards in their industries has won our network the respect of several organizations, among which the Bureau de normalisation du Québec, the Coop Carbone, the Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation (MDEIE) and the Table d'accompagnement-conseil des entreprises du secteur privé (TACEP).

Started in 2008, our project Espace économique francophone canadien, which has resulted in trade missions and a gathering of entrepreneurs in Lévis in March 2011, is expanding beyond our expectations. The Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie established economic development as its priority and implemented a steering committee to organize the first economic forum of stakeholders working with francophone entrepreneurs that will be held in October 2012. The Réseau has been invited to participate. These efforts to develop markets that will be more comfortable for our entrepreneurs are already showing benefits. Our data indicate that, since 2008, the percentage of businesses that have established business relationships in other provinces of Canada has increased significantly.

On top of all that, we have an improved and funded Youth Strategy that can better meet the needs of young people in their business ventures and provide a more beneficial partnership with the BDC and numerous projects and alliances that are described further on.

These successes were not stolen. They are the results of consistent hard work that was often in the shadows for over 30 years. In the movement that is currently shaking governmental organizations, we are pleased that we have stayed firmly rooted in the Canadian government's wishes and priorities. On the other hand, we have the responsibility of continuing our work and being more responsive to our clients and communities, in order to play our role as leader in the development of our communities.

Thanks to our autonomy and the time we have been given, the time is right to question our governance and management, to introduce the necessary changes in our methods and to adapt our work methods to the new realities in order to preserve the type of response that we are known for. Over the next year, we invite you to think about these issues. In the meantime, we thank you for your work and your solidarity.

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

▼ Raymond Cimon / Treasurer



Another fiscal year has come to a positive end for the Réseau des SADC et CAE, despite reduced operating revenues of 18% and 14% for transitional funds.

Firstly, the renewed contribution agreements with Canada Economic Development have resulted in a decrease of \$700,000 in contributions. The Réseau accepted this decision as part of a collective effort to balance the federal budget.

Secondly, the capitalization fund of the Réseau des SADC et CAE generated no activities in 2011–12, as the maximum contribution had already been given out. This represents a difference of \$800,000 from contributions available in previous years. In addition, a number of projects funded by both federal and provincial departments have been discontinued.

In actual fact, our organization is back up to speed, with revenue of about \$5 million in funding (\$5.2 million in 2011–12) as in previous years. As usual, the majority of this year's revenues are being passed on to members (\$3.7 million) through our different programs and initiatives.

It is important to acknowledge the \$9 million given by CED to Capital Réseau in March 2011, \$4 million of which will be distributed over the next five years to the CFDCs to be used for capitalization of their regular and youth investment funds.

Remember also that the CFDCs and CBDCs of Québec are the only organizations that receive funding from the CFP, which has a five-year agreement with the Government of Canada. This guaranteed funding stream will see us into the coming years with more peace of mind and confidence.

**\$9 MILLION
GIVEN BY
CED TO
CAPITAL
RÉSEAU**

COVER STORY CONTINUED...

THE PEOPLE OF THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS

In rural Québec, we have already begun to see the emergence of the light-green triangle that will take over the pinwheel that once characterized CFDCs and CBDCs. However, to get to that point, several observations have been made and validated:

- ▼ The Réseau offers financing but also many other services.
- ▼ The communication platform must have significant differentiation: external platform, internal mobilization and encouraging links with partners.
- ▼ So that the Réseau can stand out from the competition, the brand and the Réseau des SADC et CAE's offering must be marketed to other players who share the territory.
- ▼ The Réseau will increase its attractiveness and influence by thinking like a brand owner and acting as a retailer.

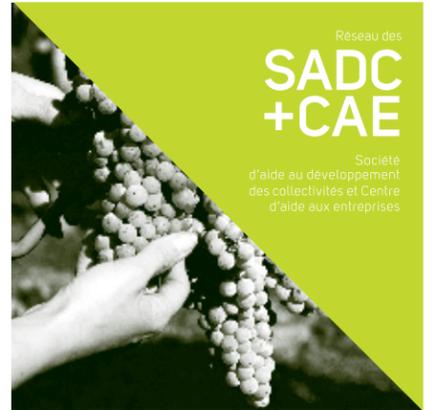
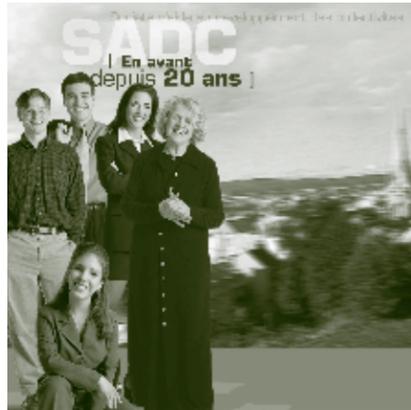
▼ While building the perception of the brand and the Réseau's offering, the communication platform must encourage the involvement of people who are more committed and engage those who are less determined.

Ultimately, we want the new brand to become the cornerstone for marketing the Réseau's complete offering, motivating, adding new members and creating interest and support from partners and donors.

To get there, the Réseau's commitment—even its promise—can be summed up in a single phrase: "Success for all—members, clients and partners alike."

The enthusiasm of members and the excitement of clients and partners show that green tends to succeed!

"SUCCESS FOR ALL—MEMBERS, CLIENTS AND PARTNERS ALIKE."



Evolution of the Réseau des SADC et CAE's image from 1998 to the present.

CONNECT! COVER STORY CONTINUED...

Partners say that too many companies in Québec are not connected. They have adopted practices of banking and shopping online, but few of them have taken the step to develop a transactional website allowing them to directly sell their products or services.

On January 27, the free lecture tour was launched to raise awareness of the situation among small businesses and self-employed workers and to offer solutions for integrating new communications technologies in their businesses. Fourteen of the most remote regions in Québec have already been visited, and more than 1,400 participants took advantage of the good advice being offered. The winning operation will continue over the next few months, eventually covering 40 cities.

Entrepreneurs aware of the impact of technology on business development will continue to learn through training sessions offered by Entrepreneuriat Québec. They will learn to master the basics of designing a website even a transactional website.

Since 1995, CFDCs and CBDCs have identified the challenge for SMEs in mastering and accessing communications and information technology. Opération Branchons les PME du Québec is the latest tool that has been added to the well-stocked kit designed by CFDCs and CBDCs.

Opération Branchons les PME du Québec, because of the reputation of the keynote speaker and enthusiasm of

the participants, provides Québec's CFDCs and CBDCs with a showcase for positioning themselves as allies with SMEs in integrating communications technologies.

OPÉRATION branchons les PME du Québec



COVER STORY CONTINUED...

THE COOPERATIVE, A MISUNDERS-TOOD BUSINESS MODEL



This \$30-million fund will be made up by contributions from partners: Capital régional et coopératif Desjardins, the Québec government, the Conseil québécois de la coopération et de la mutualité, the Business Development Bank of Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Réseau des SADC et CAE du Québec.

Shareholding workers cooperatives are a tool not only for fostering employee participation in building capital and in enriching their business, but also for planning replacement for entrepreneurs concerned about ensuring the survival of their business after retirement.

The new fund addresses two priorities of CFDCs and CBDCs: creating new businesses and jobs and transferring businesses to the next generation. These are the reasons the Réseau des SADC et CAE has joined in the creation of this new financial tool.

The tentative agreement between the partners, which will formalize the terms for financing the fund, will be ratified in the coming months.

\$30 MILLION

FOR THE NEW FONDS DE CO-INVESTISSEMENT COOP, A CO-INVESTMENT FUND.

THE ANNUAL CONGRESS, AS POPULAR AS EVER



Workshop and field visit participants

The 12th Congress of the Réseau des SADC et CAE du Québec took place last June in the region served by the CAE Montmagny-L'Islet. The event was brilliantly hosted by the CBDC and its team, in collaboration with the neighbouring CFDCs of Kamouraska and Bellechasse-Etchemins.

Over 240 participants from 59 CFDCs and CBDCs got together in Montmagny to identify problems and find possible solutions for maintaining human capital in the region to ensure the survival of the communities. Participants were given a combination of training, workshops and field visits, and enjoyed a festive banquet.

Like every year, the Congress of CFDCs and CBDCs is the opportunity to gather the numerous volunteers who strengthen the community development movement in Québec.

OVER
240
PARTICIPANTS
FROM
59 CFDCs
AND
CBDCs



A LAND OF WINTER

The Rues principales Foundation held their 24th Annual Conference September 28, 2011. The theme, “Embracing Winter,” was chosen to increase awareness of the development potential afforded by this season that best defines us as a people.

Mr. Jean-François Lagarde, Economic Development Officer for the SADC de Gaspé-Nord, presented a winter development project for the Chic-Chocs.

Mr. Pierre Marois, President of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, presented the Animation-Promotion Award to the municipality of Granby. The SADC de Matane, the SADC d’Abitibi-Ouest and the SADC de Mégantic were honoured for their involvement in successful efforts to revitalize their respective communities.



Mr. Pierre Marois and the winners, at the banquet.



Mr. Jean-François Lagarde, Economic Development Officer for the SADC de Gaspé-Nord, during his presentation.

THE GASPÉ REGION WELCOMED RURAL COMMUNITY EXPERTS

The eighth edition of the Université rurale québécoise (URQ) took place September 12-16, 2011, under the theme “Reinvention Through Innovation.”

Rural community stakeholders and university researchers from Québec and abroad shared their knowledge and expertise to develop practical tools to promote rural community development.

Over 250 participants discussed practices and initiatives related to the theme that have been undertaken in communities located in the regional county municipalities (RCMs) of Avignon and Bonaventure.

The CFDCs have been partners of the URQ since the very beginning, when it was first held in Abitibi-Témiscamingue in 1997. In 2011, the SADC de Baie-des-Chaleurs played host.

OVER
250
 PARTICIPANTS

NEW INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Last September, the Réseau des SADC et CAE and the Ordre des agronomes du Québec sealed a partnership that helped define their respective roles in accordance with the recognized expertise in providing consulting services and financial assistance to agricultural producers.

The new partners share common values and priorities, including the maintenance and development of the agricultural industry in Québec, access to financing by agricultural businesses and succession of agricultural businesses.

Their collaboration will benefit agricultural producers in Québec, who will have access to more comprehensive and integrated services.



The President of the Réseau des SADC et CAE, Mr. Pierre Marois, and the President of the Ordre des agronomes du Québec, Mr. René Mongeau.

FROM SHAWINIGAN TO NIAMEY



Ms. Catherine Adam from the SADC Centre-de-la-Mauricie at the Forum international francophone.

Catherine Adam, an employee from the SADC Centre-de-la-Mauricie, had the chance to attend the Forum international francophone held last January in Niamey, Niger, which focussed on the theme “Jeunesse et emplois verts” (youth and green jobs).

About a hundred development officers and entrepreneurs working in green economics aged 18-30 years old came from 30 French-speaking regions to join 300 Nigerian youths and discuss problems facing youth employment in the context of the green economy.

Some recommendations made during the Forum will be presented at the United Nations sustainable development conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June.

AMADOU WAS FAR FROM BORED AT THE MANIC

Through its connections with Canadian Crossroads International (CCI), the SADC Centre-de-la-Mauricie was put in contact with a development officer in Mali, Amadou Keita, who came to Québec for three months. He was very interested in the youth initiatives introduced by CFDCs—especially the Youth Strategy.

While in Québec, Amadou offered his services as mentor to a group of young participants at Camp Je in Baie-Comeau. He guided them through each step in the process of starting their own business. He also led training workshops for all 23 participants. The youth really appreciated receiving advice from a mentor who was from another country and a different culture.

Amadou plans to draw inspiration from the Youth Strategy and Camp Je programs to develop a method to promote entrepreneurship among Malian youth.

HEMP, THE NEW ENTREPRENEURIAL FIBRE OF D'AUTRAY-JOLIETTE

In 2004, when it became clear that the age-old tobacco culture would die off in Québec, the Canadian government commissioned a study to help tobacco farmers turn to alternative crops. Of all the possible fruit and vegetables to harvest, the study chose... hemp.

From the very beginning, the SADC de D'Autray-Joliette supported the few determined ex-tobacco farmers who tried their hand at hemp farming. A trip to Europe was organized to better understand how to farm this little-known plant.

One thing quickly became clear: raw hemp had little value. In 2007, local partners—including, of course, the CFDC—created Lanaupôle Fibres, an organization

dedicated to increasing awareness of the usefulness of hemp. The organization's objective is to create a new technology cluster in Québec dedicated to industrial applications for fibre plants, which requires that the plant be processed before it is exported.

Others eventually caught on to the partners' vision. Lanaupôle recently received a grant of \$1.1 million to acquire state-of-the-art technology for its experimental plant in Lavaltrie. This equipment will enable plant components to be separated to obtain natural materials in a variety of forms. In the case of hemp, the entire plant can be used in a sustainable agriculture setting.

In Lanaudière, the next best thing after tobacco is hemp.



A COFFEE TABLE ESSENTIAL

Sixty-seven inspiring accounts highlight the stories of entrepreneurs that are behind business successes in all corners of Québec and their contribution to furthering entrepreneurship. This collection is a source of motivation for the next generation of entrepreneurs.

DISCOVER THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT CFDCS AND CBDCS HAVE MADE TO THESE WONDERFUL SUCCESS STORIES.

CAN YOU LIMIT YOURSELF TO JUST ONE STORY PER DAY?

The collection is available from the Réseau des SADC et CAE and on the website at www.sadc-cae.ca

SPECIAL INITIATIVES: A FLEXIBLE LOCAL CHOICE

This year has seen the creation of three special initiatives for CFDCs: Student Employment, Shared-Cost Communications and Local Development Projects. The first two initiatives have also been created for CBDCs. Thanks to the execution of the contribution agreement with Canada Economic Development, this was accomplished in a decompartmentalized manner and with greater flexibility.

The total invested made by the CFDCs and CBDCs was \$2.1 million. The Local Development Projects initiative received the most in contributions from the CFDCs with \$1.4 million. This initiative is the best way for CFDCs to make a difference in their field. It is also often the avenue of choice for supporting initiatives or projects in collaboration with local partners. The CFDCs also invested \$330,000 to encourage the hiring of students and put \$350,000 towards communications. The CBDCs put \$60,000 towards the hiring of students and \$26,000 towards communications.

The ways in which CFDCs and CBDCs manage special initiatives can be expected to change in the coming years. The adoption of the new common logo for

CFDCs and CBDCs and the use of tools displaying the logo may further the Shared-Cost Communications initiative over the short term.

THE TOTAL
INVESTED
MADE BY THE
CFDCS AND
CBDCS WAS
\$2.1
MILLION

ANGELS AMONG US



The organization Anges Québec groups successful entrepreneurs who are willing to help up-and-comers by getting involved in startup companies and providing a source of non-traditional investment to infant businesses. There are three active chapters, in Montréal, Québec and Sherbrooke.

The organization has partnered with the Réseau des SADC et CAE in an effort to assess the viability of chapters outside of major urban centres. Anges Québec recognizes the Réseau and its members for their expert knowledge of their communities, their ability to identify and solicit individuals who fit the angel member profile and their flair for discovering promising projects. Members are ready to lead a pilot project by contributing to the process of setting up a chapter in a rural area.

CFDCS AND CBDCS CAN ACCESS CAPITAL THROUGH CAPITAL RÉSEAU

March 30, 2011, marks an important day in the history of Capital Réseau SADC et CAE: it received \$9 million in funding as part of an agreement it has with Canada Economic Development (CED) to provide CFDCs and CBDCs with capital and access to other sources of capital.

\$5 MILLION

BEFORE JUNE 30, 2011 FOR
CFDCs AND CBDCs

Capital Réseau had committed to securing a minimum of \$5 million before June 30, 2011 for CFDCs and CBDCs, who were then charged with investing this amount in local SMBs before the end of August.

Capital Réseau proved that the capital requirements it had submitted to CED were justified.

As at the deadlines, \$6.5 million had been lent to CFDCs and CBDCs, and \$5.3 million had been committed to SMBs.



THE ABCS OF JOINT FINANCING WITH THE BDC

Over the last year, the partnership that CFDCs and CBDCs have built with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) has made it possible to grant 312 loans to small businesses, for a total investment of \$42 million.



During the launching of the new ICT loan on April 27, 2012. From left to right: Mr. André Goyette, Partner, ICT Technologies, BDC / Ms. Hélène Deslauriers, Executive Director of the Réseau des SADC et CAE / Mr. Pierre Marois, President, Réseau des SADC et CAE / Mr. Dany Grimard, Eastern Quebec, Vice President, Financing and Consulting, BDC

As for the most recent agreement that allows certain CFDCs and CBDCs to approve up to \$50,000 in additional financing on the BDC's behalf, it is worth noting that 36 CFDCs and CBDCs have been accredited to use this tool, 17 have already used it and 23 loans have been approved, totalling \$965,000 in investments from the BDC and \$1.1 million from CFDCs and CBDCs.

In addition to financing, the BDC has also assisted CFDCs and CBDCs by offering four customized training sessions on financial set-up and analysis as well as another session on the environment. The presence of BDC representatives at the CFDC and CBDC semi-annual meeting last November was noticed. They led workshops about cash flow, the financing of intangible assets and preparing for client meetings. One session was also led by a Bank economist.

The Réseau des SADC et CAE has a rich and diversified partnership with the BDC. Both organizations seize every opportunity to work together and explore new avenues to grow together for the benefit of small businesses in Québec.

SPECIAL REPORTS

YOUTH CORNER

THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE MAKES THE SBIP AVAILABLE IN QUÉBEC

The Small Business Internship Program (SBIP) is designed to help SMBs increase their competitive edge by providing them with support to develop their online marketing and adopt e-commerce practices and technologies.

- ▼ 2009: Beginning of the partnership between Industry Canada and the Réseau des SADC et CAE
- ▼ 12 weeks: Length of each internship
- ▼ 75%: Portion of wages and related expenses that are reimbursed
- ▼ \$10,000: Maximum cost of each internship
- ▼ \$1.4M: Investment received by the Réseau des SADC et CAE from Industry Canada
- ▼ 236: Number of jobs created in SMBs for young people aged 15-30 years old that are completing post-secondary studies

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Québec Entrepreneurship Contest targets students and entrepreneurs at the business planning stage.

- ▼ 1998: First annual contest
- ▼ 2011-2012: 14th contest, 3,490 projects presented, 46,988 participants, and a record 48.5% of participants were young women!

The Réseau des SADC et CAE partners in the organization of the contest and contributes especially to the Student Entrepreneurship Division of the contest.

CAPYI: PROGRAMMING CODE OR...?

The Community Access Program (CAP) Youth Initiative (YI) is overseen by Industry Canada and is aimed at enabling youth to acquire information and communications technology (ICT) skills at a community access centre in order to improve their long-term employment opportunities.

- ▼ 1995: Beginning of the Réseau's partnership with Industry Canada on the Community Access Program (CAP)
- ▼ 2006: Addition of the Youth Initiative (CAPYI)
- ▼ 39: Number of managerial organizations that are coordinated by the Réseau des SADC et CAE
- ▼ 300: Number of community access centres in Québec
- ▼ \$1,087,138: Investment the Réseau des SADC et CAE has received from the Canadian government
- ▼ 174: Number of internships that were available in 2011-2012 to students aged 15-30 years old

While the Government of Canada has announced it will no longer contribute to the CAP, Industry Canada continues to fund youth internships as part of the CAPYI.

174
INTERNSHIPS
IN 2011-2012

CAMP JE



Camp Je (young entrepreneurs' camp) is a Réseau des SADC et CAE initiative aimed at encouraging youth aged 13-17 to become entrepreneurs and live in the regions.

- ▼ 2000: First Camp Je
- ▼ 2011-2012: Third camp available throughout Québec
- ▼ 23: Number of participants who attended the 2011-2012 edition at the Jardins des glaciers in Baie-Comeau
- ▼ 1 week: Length of the camp
- ▼ 5: Number of small businesses that were created. One of the Réseau's partners, the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), provided funding for the businesses and assessed their profitability. Results were positive: organizations received funding!
- ▼ 1,250: Number of participants that have experienced Camp Je since 2000.

1250
PARTICIPANTS THAT
HAVE EXPERIENCED
CAMP JE SINCE 2000.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR INTERNET COMMUNITY ACCESS CENTRES (ICACS)

Industry Canada has undertaken an initiative to provide additional funding to increase access to information and communications technologies (ICT) in communities that are cut off by the "digital divide." Industry Canada's contribution allows the Réseau des SADC et CAE to provide access centres with financial assistance to maintain and develop Internet access services as well as ICT-related training and support services.

\$6 M
TOTAL AMOUNT
INVESTED IN ACCESS
CENTRES SINCE 2002

- ▼ 2002: Beginning of the Réseau's partnership with Industry Canada
- ▼ \$317,074: Financial envelope allocated to the Réseau des SADC et CAE this year by Industry Canada
- ▼ 47: Number of access centres across eight administrative regions that received funding to complete leasehold improvements and offset related labour costs
- ▼ \$6 M: Total amount invested in access centres since 2002

While the Government of Canada has announced it will no longer contribute to the CAP, the need still exists in small remote communities. The Réseau des SADC et CAE will therefore continue to promote and support increasing access to ICT by other means.

CONGRÈS DES JEUNES ENTREPRISES DU QUÉBEC

The Réseau des SADC et CAE has signed a partnership agreement with the Congrès des jeunes entreprises du Québec (COJEQ). The Congrès is an annual event which pits over 100 young people aged 16-18 years old from across Québec against each other in a variety of competitions such as developing a business plan and simulating stock exchange activities. Last March, the Réseau des SADC et CAE contributed to the Congrès by giving a speech that focussed on promoting the tools and services made available to youth by CFDCs and CBDCs.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

IN ABITIBI, PROSPECTING IS ABOUT MORE THAN MINES

The “future thinkers” project launched in Abitibi in January 2011 has continued over the last year. The community of Mégantic launched a second pilot project in the same vein. The project, which is based on a long-term approach to sustainable development in communities, aims to equip CFDCs and local partners with tools so that they can incorporate a prospective perspective into their strategic reflection rather than limiting their frame of reference to the past.

During the development stage of the programs, the two CFDCs created a series of tools intended for committees that are tasked with planning. The next steps will be to get organizations to start using the tools and then to follow up on the planning process.

A key observation is that economic globalization is changing: a shift towards regionalizing economies is taking shape at varying rates. Once the trend to localize takes hold in agriculture and the overall economy, rural communities in Québec will be one step ahead as they will already have an adapted planning tool.

ELECTED OFFICIALS AT WORK... ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Réseau des SADC et CAE is continuing its partnership with the Fédération Québécoise des Municipalités (FQM). During the Fédération’s annual congress held last September, the Réseau carved its place in the sustainable development arena.

André Boily, Executive Director of the SADC du Haut-Saguenay, gave a presentation to elected officials. After postulating that the first obstacle encountered by businesses when trying to adopt sustainable development practices was a lack of support, Mr. Boily then presented the program developed by the CFDCs to address this void.

The program begins with an awareness and self-diagnosis step. Businesses that wish to continue with the program then undergo a period of continuous improvement, which leads to sustainable development certification and eventually access to calls for tender from major contractors.

CFDC and CBDC officers improve their own skills when guiding businesses through the sustainable development program, by sharing the specialized resources provided by eco-advisors. Several hundred businesses have already taken advantage of the support services offered by CFDCs and CBDCs.

Each participant went home with a pad of recycled paper that featured a summary of three sustainable development projects offered by CFDCs and CBDCs on the back side as a reminder.

A NEED TO FILL IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Mr. Claude Villeneuve

The semi-annual themed meeting held last September assembled more than 40 participants, who learned about the progression of sustainable development in Québec and shared their vision for the role that CFDCs and CBDCs should adopt in this matter.

Mr. Claude Villeneuve, a professor at the Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, presented the main characteristics of sustainable development as well as challenges involved, and provided a clear picture of the current situation in Québec before opening the floor for discussion and then heading off to training sessions.

Representatives from Fondation and Investissement Québec presented their respective approaches to funding eco-friendly projects. A few CFDCs shared what they have learned from various local initiatives while CFDC members from the sustainable development working group displayed information about their method of guiding businesses, which has been adopted by 23 CFDCs and CBDCs. To close, Yves Lusignan, an expert and consultant who supports the “future thinkers” pilot project in Abitibi-Témiscamingue, updated attendees on the progress of the innovative project.

There is a need to fill in sustainable development, and CFDCs and CBDCs intend to fill it!

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE IS A GROUP OF **23** CFDCS AND CBDCS

FRENCH-LANGUAGE EVENTS

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR NATIONAL DIALOGUING AND SHARING EXPERTISE

The main French-language event on the calendar, the Forum pancanadien sur le développement économique en francophonie canadienne (a pan-Canadian forum on economic development with respect to the Canadian Francophonie) will take place October 31 to November 2, 2012, in Gatineau. The Réseau des SADC et CAE is a member of the Forum steering committee and is once again contributing by continuing to help Québec-based businesses diversify their markets in the best possible conditions.

The Forum is attended by representatives from the government, community and private sector who work with French-language businesses. Participants will share their practices and discuss strategies to increase the Francophonie’s contribution to the Canadian economy and ensure the vitality of Francophone communities in Canada. A better understanding of Francophone economic communities in Canada must be the cornerstone on which we build future efforts to develop partnerships and open markets as well as establish our solidarity response to foreign markets.

The Forum intends to develop an integrated action plan that will define stakeholders’ roles in the Canadian Francophonie’s contribution to community vitality.

QUEBEC DOESN’T FOOL AROUND WITH THE FRANCOPHONIE!

The Forum de la francophonie canadienne, also organized by the SAIC, is being held in May 2012 in Québec city. In accordance with the decision taken at the Ministerial Conference on the Canadian Francophonie, this arts- and culture-focused forum will emphasize economic development in the Canadian Francophonie. About 400 stakeholders of the Francophonie in Canada will have the opportunity to take stock of the evolving relationship between Québec and the Acadian and Francophone communities since the implementation, five years ago, of the Québec Policy on the Canadian Francophonie. Discussions will be held on French language, culture and economic development issues facing the French-speaking community in an atmosphere conducive to networking and business alliances. The Réseau des SADC et CAE was invited to present the results of the Espace économique francophone.

RENDEZ-VOUS ACADIE-QUÉBEC – TAKE 4

The Rendez-vous Acadie-Québec events are also a way for Québec entrepreneurs to meet with their counterparts outside the province—in this case, it is those from New Brunswick who get the chance to discuss business opportunities through this platform.

This event was created in 2005 and is held every two years, alternately in Québec and New Brunswick. The Charlevoix region hosted it in late September 2011, with the theme “Entreprendre en région, avoir les moyens de ses ambitions” (“Going into business in a rural area, making sure your means match your dreams”). Nearly 140 people, including about fifty entrepreneurs, took part in the networking meetings, conferences and company visits.

This meeting was made possible by the contribution of Québec’s Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes (SAIC), with support from the Réseau des SADC et CAE and the Association des centres locaux de développement du Québec (ACLDQ). Members of the Réseau des SADC et CAE were the architects of the event’s success thanks to their ability to mobilize entrepreneurs and their commitment to support them throughout their market development efforts.

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FRENCH-LANGUAGE EVENTS

THE ESPACE ÉCONOMIQUE FRANCOPHONE CANADIEN: THE FIRST TRADEMARK OF THE RÉSEAU DES SADC ET CAE

Since 2005, the Réseau des SADC et CAE has been working in partnership with RDÉE Canada (Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité). When it comes to providing Francophone Canadian entrepreneurs with the tools to take advantage of business opportunities in the Canadian market outside their province—in a geographical area that respects their linguistic and cultural context—two networks are better than one.

The two partners share the goal of developing SMEs and communities, and share their complementary areas of expertise: business financing (Réseau des SADC et CAE) and working in the Francophone and Anglophone environments (RDÉE).

The objective goal of the Espace économique francophone canadien is to promote economic diversification by encouraging business ties—networking between small businesses within the Canadian Francophonie and between growth sectors within communities. Follow-up investigations with clients have revealed that of the businesses that received help from a CFDC or CBDC and that developed new markets, the number selling to other Canadian provinces has increased substantially since 2007.

Since 2008, the Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales Canadiennes (SAIC) du Québec has helped to facilitate the pairing of Québec entrepreneurs with entrepreneurs in other regions of Canada by organizing exploratory missions.

This year, the missions have targeted certain sectors and introduced communities that share an interest in the same sector to each other. For example, the Matapédia region hosted entrepreneurs from St-Isidore, Alberta, to share expertise in the forest biomass industry. Upon returning from his mission in Matapédia, Marc S. Tremblay, Director General of RDÉE Alberta stated [translation]

“The next step will be to share information on energy use in St-Isidore to conduct a prefeasibility study with the help of the firm Gestion Conseils PMI, whom we met during our mission. This company has shown great leadership and expertise in the biomass industry and has been responsible for most of the studies and installations of biomass projects in the Gaspé peninsula and elsewhere. If this study yields positive results, St-Isidore will probably make plans to install a biomass boiler in the community.”

The Réseau des SADC et CAE is proud to show its trademark, the Espace économique francophone canadien, and intends to promote it at every opportunity.

KNOWLEDGE AND BUSINESS JOIN FORCES IN MAURICIE



The event Savoir Affaires Mauricie shaped up to be a partnership between knowledge and entrepreneurship. For 6 days, 214 participants including graduate students (master's, doctoral and postdoctoral) from Université du Québec, business leaders, socio-economic stakeholders (CFDCs, CBDCs, CLDs, etc.) and government representatives took a shared approach to economic diversification to determine possible solutions, business opportunities and projects for the region.

The result was 35 projects that were divided into high-potential areas: energy (energy efficiency, forest biomass, biodiesel and hydrogen), bio-economy (forestry, agriculture and bioprocessing) and tourism (recreational tourism, ecotourism and agro-tourism).

Participants expressed their appreciation for the Savoir Affaires type of event. Karine Tremblay, graduate student in environmental science, said: “This event is a great opportunity to link research to the real world, resulting in varied and innovative projects.”

Savoir Affaires, an innovative model that can be used anywhere!

ON YOUR MARK! GET SET! GO!

The collaborative relationship between Canada Economic Development (CED) and CFDCs and CBDCs over the past two years was highlighted by a relay race during Minister Denis Lebel's tour with all CFDCs and CBDCs across Québec.

The results of this tour helped set the stage for marathon talks which ended in March 2011 with the renewal of agreements with CFDCs and CBDCs for five years.

An intense spinning session followed to draft the agreements, which were lightened through the process!

Finally, the partners supported each other for a sprint that lasted from July 4 to 15, 2011. Five educational sessions about the new agreements were jointly offered to directors and employees of CFDCs and CBDCs, as well as to employees of CED business offices. These fun meetings attracted 155 participants from Val-d'Or to Matane. Everyone is ready and in place on the starting line for the long jog planned over the next five years!

TRADING COACHES: ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Over the past year, the Réseau des SADC et CAE has had real movement on the ice regarding management. New coaches were hunted, and others went to play for the other team. Some have decided to shift their career, while the dean has decided to hang up his jersey.

The Réseau welcomes the following coaches to the vast management team: Soraya Zarate at the SADC de la Côte-Nord, Daniel Gaudet at the SADC des Îles-de-la-Madeleine, Julie Lemieux at the SADC de la MRC de Maskinongé and Robert Lafrance at the SADC du Suroît-Sud.

In addition, the Réseau bids farewell to management members who signed contracts with new teams and those who made a change in career: Stéphane Lacroix from the SADC de la Côte-Nord joined Canada Economic Development, Michel Lavergne from the SADC de Papineau joined Rues principales, Marie-Josée Suzor left the SADC de la MRC de Maskinongé, Yvon D'Aoust left the SADC du Suroît-Sud, Marco Lethiecq and Philippe Desharnais both left the SADC du Haut-Saint-Maurice and finally Lucien Landry, after more than 30 years of loyal service, left the SADC des Îles-de-la-Madeleine for a peaceful retirement.

OUR TEAMS

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- Annie Potvin**, Nord-du-Québec

OUTGOING MEMBERS

- Michel Lavergne**, SADC Papineau
- Jocelyn Lévesque**, SADC de Rouyn-Noranda

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- Christine Pilote**, Director of Communications
- Jolin Ferland**, Director of Member Services and Training
- Dominique Côté**, Events Coordinator
- Audrey Thibaudeau**, Secretary/Receptionist
- Nathalie Gagnon**, Accounting Coordinator
- Annie Pomerleau**, Special Initiatives and Youth Strategy Coordinator
- Chloé Lafrance**, Communications and Marketing Project Manager

SPORTS EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT FOR SUCCESS

Over the past year, the Réseau des SADC et CAE invested in the design, improvement and update of tools offered to members.

The latest version 3.0 of the GIFT software to manage financing and technical projects was unveiled in a training session at the November semi-annual. This improved version has a new look, and it is user-friendly and easy to navigate. This tool, which is indispensable in CFDCs' and CBDCs' daily routine, is already becoming popular.

A second tool was re-launched at the same event. The HR toolkit has been re-introduced in a training session offered by CBDC Restigouche in New Brunswick, a pioneer in the development of this tool which introduces a diagnostic approach for managing human resources in small businesses.

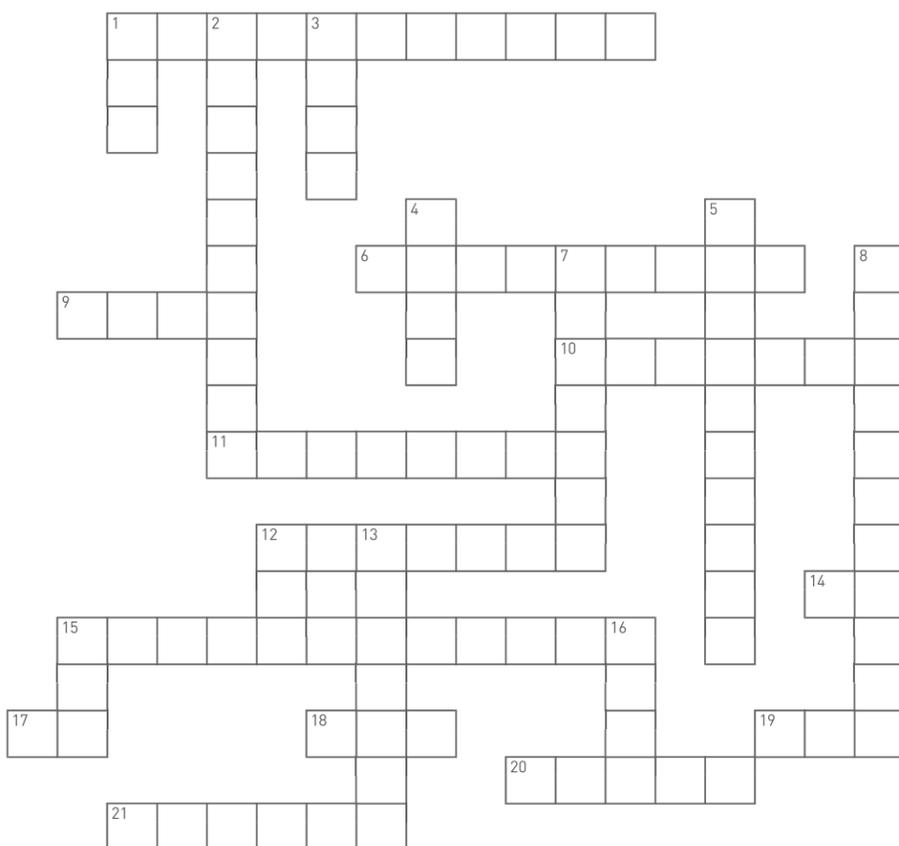
Finally, the MIG (geographic information module), a tool for information and analysis developed by the Réseau des SADC et CAE and available online to its members, is being updated with the latest available data.



Translation of excerpt from "En voyage avec Mafalda" Quino - Éditions Glenat, May 2006

IN YOUR SPARE TIME

CROSSWORDS



ACROSS

- 1 Canadian economic space for Québec SMEs to develop ties in other provinces
- 6 The location of the last colloque
- 9 Operational group
- 10 Gathering
- 11 The shape of the new logo
- 12 Success breeds _____
- 14 Camp for youth aged 13-16
- 15 The General Assembly of the United Nations declared 2012 International Year of _____
- 17 Board of Directors
- 18 Now in its ninth instalment
- 19 Nine million dollars have been invested with this partner this year
- 20 Youth initiative for people aged 15 to 30 to gain employment in ICT
- 21 Group of communities

DOWN

- 1 Reference for all things municipal
- 2 Specialist in natural sciences and member of the OAQ
- 3 Indispensable tool developed with Industry Canada to help SMEs and small communities gain access to ICT
- 4 Volume
- 5 Action taken by someone who likes to make things happen
- 7 The Réseau is founded upon its _____
- 8 Group of entrepreneurs who wish to pay it forward by offering sources of financing
- 12 Small or medium enterprise
- 13 Leader of OPÉRATION Branchons les PME du Québec
- 15 Major partner of CFDCs and CBDCs
- 16 Internship program in business

Solution: www.sadc-cae.ca/Publications/Rapports annuels