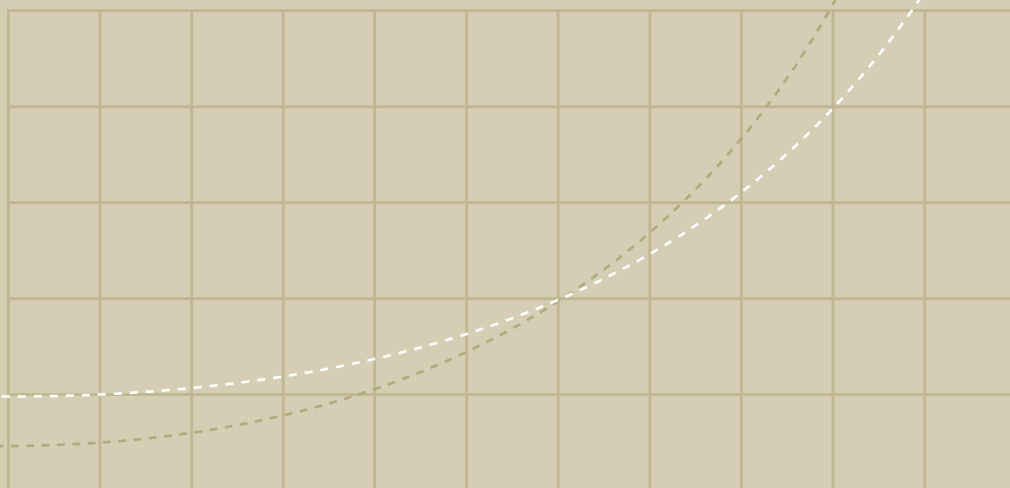




RDÉE CANADA
ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTES
TO CANADIAN ECONOMIC GROWTH!

Study Conducted by Ronald Bisson and Associates Inc.



RDÉE
Canada

*The national Francophone
economic development network*

Canada

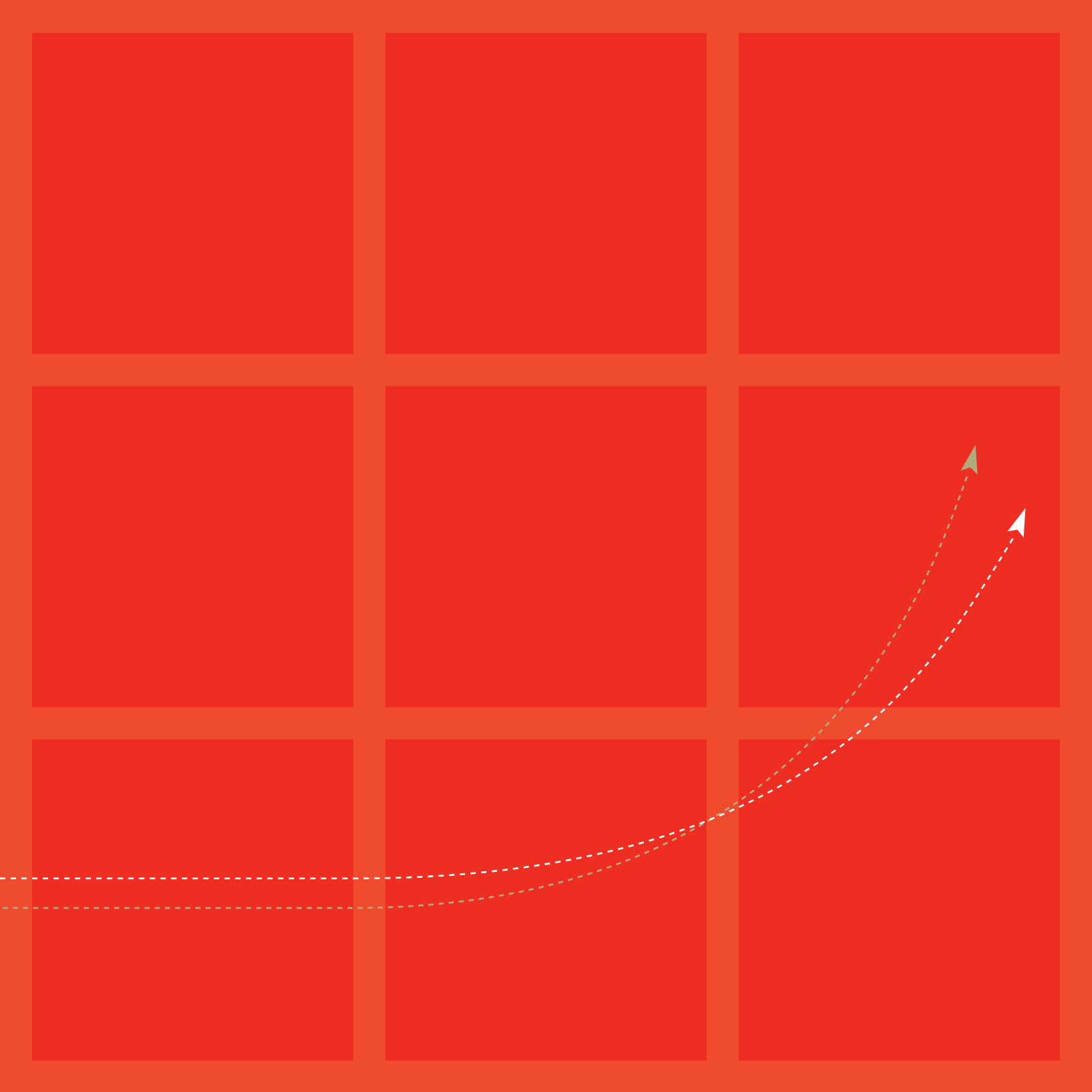




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RDÉE CANADA

Mission

RDÉE Canada, architect of Francophone and Acadian community economic development, actively contributes to Canadian economic growth.

Our vision

Francophone and Acadian communities are leaders and an essential driving force behind the Canadian economy.

Mandates

- Influences government policies, programs and services so that they more effectively meet the economic development and employability needs of the Francophone and Acadian communities.
- Contributes to Francophone and Acadian community economic development and employability.

THE RDEE NETWORK CONTRIBUTES

TO IMPROVED COMPETITIVENESS OF THE CANADIAN ECONOMY AND, IN PARTICULAR, TO ITS PROVINCE'S OR TERRITORY'S ECONOMY, BY FOCUSING ON (OR BASED ON COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES) COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FRANCOPHONE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE EMPLOYABILITY OF FRANCOPHONE WORKERS.

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH AN ENHANCED FOCUS ON THE FRENCH LANGUAGE WILL INCREASE LINGUISTIC DUALITY IN THE PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES AND WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENHANCED VITALITY OF FRANCOPHONE MINORITY COMMUNITIES.



INTRODUCTION

For more than ten years, RDÉE Canada (*Réseau de développement économique et d'employabilité*) has collaborated with provincial and territorial organizations (12 RDÉE) to enhance the vitality and support the development of Francophone minority communities. Our network is active in four priority areas: *Tourism, Rural Development, Employability and Youth Entrepreneurship*, and *Knowledge-based Economy*.

Indeed, RDÉE is active in nine provinces and three territories where a designated organization sponsors a local RDÉE. Each of these organizations acts as an independent work unit. Some of them are particularly active in the areas of development and employability, while others are more active in the economic area.

As a community economic development (CED) leader in Francophone and Acadian communities in a minority situation, RDÉE Canada national office also offers to its provincial and territorial members a vast range of support and intervention services to support their initiatives.

Stemming from RDÉE Canada's operational strategies, these support and intervention initiatives with CED practitioners are central to the implementation of its community-based economic development strategy. RDÉE Canada's strategic activities are: professional excellence, financial diversification, communication, conferencing, research, and partnership development.



MANDATE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

RDÉE Canada commissioned Ronald Bisson and Associates Inc. to conduct a comprehensive evaluation covering the periods from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007 in order to present a wide-ranging analysis of the work carried out by all the RDÉE members.

The evaluation objectives entailed first and foremost

1. Determining the extent to which the RDÉE members achieved the planned output and how well that output matched the objectives established.
2. Determining RDÉE leverage and the relevance of the results obtained in relation to the vitality of Francophone minority communities.

The evaluation used the Treasury Board of Canada methodology and measured three components (relevance, progress and cost-effectiveness). To do this, a complete and thorough review of all activity reports, financial reports and other relevant documents produced by all the RDÉE members in the five year analysis period was carried out and interviews were conducted with the chairs / senior managers of every RDÉE and with people who are familiar with the work of the RDÉE members and who work with them.

EVALUATION RESULTS

INPUT

During the five years analysed, the combined funding of RDÉE members was \$85,090,500. The annual national network budget averaged \$17,000,000. The amount varied somewhat depending on the year and the projects obtained by RDÉE members or the delegated organizations that oversaw their activities (minimum of \$15,282,000 and maximum of \$18,719,000).

Service Canada / HRSDC¹ funded 54% of the total national network budget, and the balance was funded as follows :

WED² (16% of the national network total and 43% of the total for RDÉE members in the West), ACOA³ (4.5% of the national network total and 17% of the total for RDÉE members in the Atlantic), other federal sources (12%), RDÉE members (10%) and provincial or territorial organizations (2.2%).

OUTPUT

- ◆ Significant involvement of volunteers in community economic development
- ◆ Direct and indirect job creation
- ◆ Development of a network of partners/contributors that participate in community economic development
- ◆ Development of a network of beneficiary partners that receive services
- ◆ Conducting of a number of research studies to determine local community needs
- ◆ Support for the development of a number of strategic plans and business plans for individuals and organizations as well as community economic development plans in specific locations

Achievement of planned output: the analysis concluded that the RDÉE network output was in keeping with the objectives pursued.

¹ HRSDC: Human Resources and Social Development Canada

² WED: Western Economic Diversification Canada

³ ACOA: Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS IN RELATION TO PROGRESS OF NETWORK

RELEVANCE

Research capacity

- ◆ The RDÉE network has a strong research capacity that enables them to determine the needs of Francophone and Acadian communities in relation to community economic development.
- ◆ These studies provide the foundation for a climate conducive to community economic innovation. In some provinces and territories, innovation is also seen in the creation of close ties with the Anglophone community in the interest of shared community economic development.

- ◆ These studies are primarily ad hoc field studies that describe situations and lead to specific achievements.

Partnership diversity

- ◆ The RDÉE network has created an impressive system of partners, known as partners/contributors who are active stakeholders involved in implementing projects.
- ◆ The RDÉE network plays a role as a guide and facilitator with respect to community economic development for partners from all sectors: community, business or government.
- ◆ The RDÉE network acts as a catalyst and motivator: non-RDÉE respondents stated that many projects would not have been implemented without the RDÉE network support.

PROGRESS

Matching RDÉE output and objectives

- ◆ The RDÉE network meets a clearly identified economic development need in the Francophone communities.

- ◆ The RDÉE members output some 600 items (products and services) annually in the four key areas of *Tourism, Rural Development, Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability*, and the *Knowledge-based Economy*. *The analysis revealed that 63% of the RDÉEs' activities are in the area of development of human capital, including 47% in the development of community capacity and 16% in labour force adjustment. The analysis also revealed that 37% of the activities are in the area of economic development, including 23% in the development of businesses and industries and 14% in business support services.*
- ◆ Roughly two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the output is related to the development of human resources capacity and one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) is related to economic development. This is representative of the funding formula with Service Canada / HRSDC which alone accounts for approximately 55% of the RDÉEs' total funding.

- ♦ The “RDÉE method” has six features:
 - Articulation of the needs expressed by the grass-roots communities
 - A rigorous process for analysing the local situation
 - Community planning
 - Governance
 - An evaluation system
 - Research and applications for adequate funding
- ♦ The length of time it takes to carry out a project is generally from 24 to 36 months. A significant number of RDÉE activities do not achieve an immediate economic or community effect. The impact in the field of some broad initiatives is felt only 3.5 to even 10 years later.
- ♦ The RDÉE members that are funded only by Service Canada / HRSDC are dissatisfied that their contribution agreements prevent them from working directly with business people to facilitate the development of their businesses.

Level of investment generated by the RDÉE network

- ♦ The direct economic impact of projects attributable to action by RDÉE members is much greater than the initial investment.
- ♦ For 2006-2007, the provincial and territorial RDÉE members worked with 5,607 volunteers actively involved in projects.
- ♦ For 2006-2007, the provincial and territorial RDÉE members were involved in creating 3,007 jobs that would not have been created otherwise or would not have been created in French.
- ♦ RDÉE members’ outreach for 2006-2007 was in the order of 99,512 person-activities. This figure represents direct contacts with individuals and groups: in-person information sessions, training sessions, support for the development of projects and business plans, participation in studies and research, participation in project delivery, etc. *This figure does not include virtual visits to Web sites or newsletter distribution lists.*

Adaptability and variety of community economic activities

- ♦ The RDÉE members provide a wide range of activities in order to meet multiple needs.
- ♦ The RDÉE members do not reach all the Francophone and Acadian minority communities. Two factors come into play. First, the geographic distances increase the difficulty of reaching many communities. Second, the contribution agreements of a number of RDÉE members prevent them from working directly with business people.
- ♦ A conflict of interest is possible when a RDÉE chapter is managed by a community political organization. Such a conflict may affect the RDÉE member’s attainment of objectives. *(The Ontario RDÉE is an independent organization. The other provincial and territorial RDÉE chapters are included in one or the other of two types of delegated organizations. A delegate organization can be one whose mission is the economic development of the Francophone community, or one whose mission is to act as a spokesperson for the Francophone community.)*

Extent to which government communicators recognize the contribution by RDÉE members to community economic development

- ♦ The RDÉE members are well known to federal agencies concerned with economic development.
- ♦ A number of RDÉE members work closely with local municipalities.
- ♦ Some RDÉE members have developed strong working relationships with their provincial /territorial government and some still do not have a working relationship with their provincial government.

Usefulness of the assistance provided by the RDÉE members for beneficiary partners

- ♦ The non-business community beneficiary partners appreciate the services provided by the RDÉE members and find them helpful. The RDÉE members have contributed to building community capacity through the provision of advice, support for conducting studies and research and support for seeking funding and training.

- ♦ Business people having accessed services found them useful and were appreciative. We noted two leverage effects. First, the support from the RDÉE members contributed to growth: business sales figures showed an increase because of the support provided by the RDÉE member. Second, the support from the RDÉE member had an accelerator effect: businesses were created or grew more quickly than they would have without RDÉE member assistance.

TESTIMONIALS
FROM INDIVIDUALS
WHO HAVE
RECEIVED SERVICES
FROM A RDÉE

*« Their assistance was extremely helpful. Had it not been for the efforts of the RDÉE, the Program, **Je reviens! J'y reste!** would not have been as successful and would not be recognized nationally. The dedication of the RDÉE team today makes it possible to curtail the exodus from a region adversely affected by the departure of its young people. »*

« I attended several training seminars for Francophone business people in my province. Those seminars were organized by the RDÉE. »

« I am in constant contact with my RDÉE. My business is involved in tourism; we discuss such matters a lot. I really appreciate (the data analysis provided by my RDEE) the fact that my RDÉE analyses my statistical data; it gives me a very useful picture of my markets. The development of tools for French-language tourism is also very helpful to me. »

RDÉE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES: 2002-2003 to 2006-2007

HUMAN RESOURCES

In total, the network has over 130 employees, roughly 100 of whom are community economic development officers. The number of contract employees varies depending on the project.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The table below presents the network's sources of income for the years from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007. It clearly shows that the RDEE network is financially stable.

SOURCES OF INCOME, PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL AND NATIONAL RDÉEs – 2002-2003 TO 2006-2007

	2002 2003	2003 2004	2004 2005	2005 2006	2006 2007	TOTAL	%
SERVICE CANADA / HRSDC	9,271.50	9,059.00	9,518.30	9,112.90	9,291.50	46,253.20	54.36 %
WED	2,656.60	3,153.00	2,913.20	2,620.90	2,656.90	14,000.60	16.45 %
OTHER FEDERAL	1,159.70	1,480.80	2,648.20	2,233.60	2,787.20	10,309.50	12.12 %
DELEGATED ORGANIZATIONS / OTHER INCOME	1,352.00	1,686.10	2,148.70	1,648.30	1,937.50	8,772.60	10.31 %
ACOA	557.00	671.80	1,193.80	638.40	817.40	3,878.40	4.56 %
PROVINCIAL / TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT	285.90	349.70	297.70	558.10	384.80	1,876.20	2.21 %
TOTAL:	15,282.70	16,400.40	18,719.90	16,812.20	17,875.30	85,090.50	

NATIONAL PROJECTS

CANADA-WIDE FRANCOPHONE ECONOMIC SPACE

One of the most strategic achievements of RDÉE Canada was the partnership reached in 2005 with Quebec's Réseau des SADC (Network of Community Futures Development Corporations). Through this formal agreement, the foundations for driving Francophone economic development in Canada have been established. RDÉE Canada and Quebec's network of SADCs are working together to create a Canada-wide Francophone economic space.

This partnership will enable the two organizations to join forces to strategically position the added value of the Francophone commu-

nity in Canada. The two networks will also take advantage of unique business opportunities such as accessing Francophone and bilingual business networks and markets in Quebec, the rest of Canada and internationally, and sharing expertise and networking.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE 2010 WINTER OLYMPICS

RDÉE Canada encourages partnerships that create benefits for the Francophone and Acadian communities. Of particular note is the collaboration between the Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique (British Columbia Francophone economic development corporation), RDÉE Canada and the Vancouver Organizing Committee (VANOC) for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games and the Canadian Tourism Commission for the upcoming Winter Olympics. Canada-wide workshops were offered in 2006-2007 to business people by the RDÉE network to provide information and generate interest in the 2010 Games and the business opportunities in French related to this major project.

INTERNATIONAL FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY

RDÉE Canada is part of the network of Francophone economic players in the Forum francophone des affaires (FFA) and, specifically, acts as a liaison in Canada for this transnational forum.

Through its international activities, RDÉE Canada seeks to facilitate relations and trade between the Francophone, Acadian and foreign business communities, particularly SMEs. It aims to encourage the exchange of economic development expertise. In addition, it hopes to promote the establishment of foreign businesses in Francophone and Acadian communities throughout the country.

LAURIERS DE LA PME

Every two years, RDÉE Canada organizes a competition called the **Lauriers de la PME** that recognizes entrepreneurial excellence in Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities.

The communities represented in this event number over one million Francophones in the provinces and territories outside of Quebec.

Following their attendance at the ceremony for the **Lauriers de la PME 2007** held in Ottawa last November, the winning entrepreneurs stressed the importance of such a competition in stimulating the development of entrepreneurship. Thirty-five business finalists took part in the fourth edition of the competition.

HERE ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE IMPACT THAT THE COMPETITION HAS ON THE WINNING BUSINESSES:

« THE AWARD IS REALLY SOMETHING TERRIFIC! OUR COMMUNITY IS PROUD OF OUR SUCCESS. IT IS A SOURCE OF MOTIVATION FOR OUR EMPLOYEES. WE RECEIVED LOTS OF MEDIA COVERAGE, WHICH HELPED OPEN NEW DOORS FOR US. THE COMPETITION GAVE US AN OPPORTUNITY TO STEP BACK AND REALIZE ALL THAT WE HAD TO DO ALONG THE WAY TO GET WHERE WE ARE TODAY. »

« THE COMPETITION IS A VERY POSITIVE EXPERIENCE. WINNING A NATIONAL AWARD IS MOST IMPRESSIVE! WE ALL WORK VERY HARD, AND THE FACT THAT WE HAVE BEEN RECOGNIZED SHOWS THAT PEOPLE APPRECIATE OUR BUSINESS. I WILL STRONGLY ENCOURAGE BUSINESSES TO APPLY IN FUTURE EDITIONS OF THE COMPETITION. »

OTHER COMMENTS BY COMPETITION FINALISTS

« OUR RDÉE HELPED US CONSIDERABLY WITH OUR MARKETING PLAN AND GRANT APPLICATION.... MY BUSINESS GREW MORE QUICKLY WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE RDÉE....I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT PERCENTAGE, BUT THIS YEAR, IMMEDIATELY AFTER OUR NOMINATION FOR THE AWARD, I OBTAINED TWO NEW CUSTOMERS THE NEXT DAY. »

« OUR LOCAL RDÉE GAVE US SOME GOOD ADVICE. EVEN OUR WEB SITE WAS ROLLED OUT WITH THE HELP OF THE RDÉE, FREE OF CHARGE....LAST YEAR, MY SALES WENT UP CONSIDERABLY, AT LEAST 50%. »

CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUATION

This comprehensive evaluation confirmed that the RDÉE members are making progress toward the expected results. We can draw a definite link between the activities and output of the RDÉE members and the following results:

- ♦ Greater accessibility to quality services in French in the area of community economic development
- ♦ Improved community economic development capacity
- ♦ Greater recognition of the RDÉE members contribution by the various levels of government, particularly the federal government and certain municipalities (the evaluation noted a significant absence of provincial funding on the RDÉEs' balance sheets)

- ♦ An increase in the number of relevant community economic development projects carried out in French

The evaluation also concluded that Francophones are more involved in the economic development of their communities “in French” because of RDÉE members’ actions and that such involvement contributes to the vitality of Francophone and Acadian minority communities.

The full version of the study is available on request.

FINDINGS BY RDÉE CANADA

As a result of this evaluation, RDÉE Canada can conclude that:

- ♦ On average, each permanent provincial and territorial RDÉE employee generates 24.25 indirect jobs that would not have been created without his or her involvement (jobs of all types).
- ♦ On average, each permanent provincial and territorial RDÉE employee works with 45.22 volunteers who are actively involved in the projects.
- ♦ On average, each provincial and territorial RDÉE works with 104.2 partners.

An overview of RDÉE Canada achievements provides an opportunity to witness the early stage of the creation of a Canada-wide Francophone economic identity as a key component of the Canadian economy.



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