

Press Release  
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## Between Commitment and Exhaustion The Community Sector Appeals to Members of the National Assembly

**Ké'bec/Québec, October 18, 2023** – More than 15 MNAs and 4 ministers were addressed by a delegation of community organizations as part of the National Autonomous Community Action Week (#NACAW). Representatives from the community sector shared a singular message: Community organizations are in an impossible situation; We need more resources and better support!

“Community organizations exist to advocate for individuals’ rights and respond to their needs, regardless of their levels of education or income. Mental health, debt, drug use, the challenges of pregnancy and postpartum life—these are issues that affect everyone, and anyone might need help with them at some point in their life. Community organizations are there to provide that help, and the government must provide the resources they need to fulfill their role,” stated Hugo Valiquette, President of the Réseau québécois de l’action communautaire autonome (RQ-ACA).

This past Monday, an [open letter signed by 615 community organizations was published in La Presse](#). This impressive level of mobilization clearly signals just how important this call to action is for the Quebec government.

“The need is urgent. Workers are burning out at alarming rates while inflation and the rising cost of living are chipping away at their living conditions. Meanwhile, the housing crisis is making it increasingly difficult for organizations to find affordable spaces, which constitutes an existential threat to many of their operations,” explained Caroline Toupin, Coordinator of the RQ-ACA.

While organizations have seen some improvements in recent years, particularly with the adoption of the Plan d’action en matière d’action communautaire (PAGAC) in 2022, their funding remains woefully inadequate due to a massive growth in demand following the pandemic. Faced with a need to adapt to this new reality, the government is instead dragging its feet by refusing to index its subsidies for all organizations, leaving many crucial sectors without the support they so desperately need.

The RQ-ACA must reiterate that autonomous community action (ACA) is essential to Quebec’s social and economic development. The government must do more to reinforce this key link in our social safety net; it must invest the funds needed to support the missions of every organization through an adequate level of indexation.

### Quick Facts:

- According to a 2022 study by the Observatoire de l’ACA, 77% of community organizations reported a need for additional funding to fulfill their missions. The average amount of additional funding they required was \$132,835 per organization (\$85,000 median).
- A 2020 survey by the Observatoire found that 1 in 4 Quebecers have benefited from the services of a community organization, either for themselves or a loved one, that over

one-third of the population has worked for a community organization, and that nearly two-thirds have participated in them in a volunteer or activist role.

- A 2022 study by AppEco on the economic impact of community organizations found that a \$100 million investment in the community sector resulted in \$183.7 million dollars injected back into the economy. The same \$100 million generates \$110 million in GDP and creates or maintains 1,900 jobs.

#### **About the RQ-ACA**

The RQ-ACA is the government's primary interlocutor for independent community action. It represents 70 associations and organizations across Quebec. [rq-aca.org](http://rq-aca.org)

#### **About the National Autonomous Community Action Week (#NACAW)**

Overseen by the RQ-ACA, the #NACAW seeks to highlight the invaluable contributions made by the over 4,000 organizations, 60,000 workers and 425,000 activists and volunteers that compose the ACA movement, all of whom work tirelessly to build a more just society that truly respects the rights of all. Activities to celebrate this week are planned throughout Quebec. [rq-aca.org/snaca](http://rq-aca.org/snaca)

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