

Mid-term Evaluation of the Canadian Initiative for the Economic Diversification of Communities Reliant on Chrysotile: Summary



Objective of the Initiative

To support communities in the Des Sources and Des Appalaches Regional County Municipality in their economic transition through the creation and strengthening of businesses.

The Initiative's Highlights

- \$50 million budget.
- Two components: i) Financial assistance to economic development projects, and ii) Financial assistance to public infrastructure projects.
- As of March 31st, 2016 :
 - 33 projects approved
 - \$23.1 million in grants and contributions were awarded
 - 19 SMEs et 14 NPOs assisted
 - \$5.1 million investment for the creation of a new venture capital funds for businesses in the Des Appalaches Regional County Municipality.

About the Evaluation

- The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Canadian Initiative for the Economic Diversification of Communities Reliant on Chrysotile, and focused on factors of success to inform similar initiatives in the future.
- The evaluation covers the period from June 2013 to March 2016.

What the Evaluation Highlighted

- The Initiative meets the needs for economic diversification, business development support, and infrastructure creation following significant job losses in the mining sector.
- The Initiative is still relevant in support of targeted communities in their economic transition.
- It is being undertaken in collaboration with other stakeholders, while complementing the Des Sources Regional County Municipality Diversification Fund from the Quebec Government.
- It is aligned with government priorities by contributing to the economic growth of Quebec regions, particularly those struggling with economic difficulties.

- The mid-term results are positive despite the absence of results targets. The Initiative is progressing as planned: 33 projects were approved, which represent \$23.1 million in grants and contributions. Nine projects are completed including the creation of a business incubator that stimulates entrepreneurship through personalized services for entrepreneurs. Finally, the sales of the companies assisted and their number of employees has increased.
- Each dollar contributed by CED generated \$1.52 in additional investment.
- Through the Capital Expansion Investment Fund, the Initiative has also led to the completion of eight projects with a leveraging effect of \$3.18 per dollar contributed.
- Community stakeholders, financial partners and project proponents have expressed their satisfaction with CED's services and collaboration.
- Project eligibility criteria were adapted to better meet the needs of potential clients.
- The dedicated human and financial resources and frequent on-site visits of CED's team have contributed to the successful implementation of the Initiative.

Recommendations (as agreed upon by management)

- In order to be able to measure the achievement of results in the summative evaluation in 2021-2022, CED should identify outcome targets for this initiative. Also, CED should systematically set targets for its programs and initiatives as they are created. → **Deadline: June 30, 2018.**
- Given the successful development and implementation of this Initiative, CED should plan an additional operating budget to ensure the active presence of a dedicated team on the ground for similar initiatives in the future. → **Deadline: Ongoing.**