ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025





ACTION CANCER DU SEIN DU QUÉBEC BREAST CANCER **ACTION** QUEBEC

ABOUT BCAQ

Breast Cancer Action Quebec is a feminist health organization that is dedicated to breast cancer prevention, with a particular focus on the environmental factors linked to the disease. BCAQ works on the problem of toxic substances present in everyday products and is concerned with environmental issues that have an impact on health.

We believe that everything we do to our environment, we do to ourselves, and the work for social justice includes justice in terms of health and the environment

We also prioritize a community-centered prevention approach, making us a unique resource with a comprehensive analysis of prevention. Our interventions are always rooted in an intersectional feminist analysis. A stance of environmental anti-racism is also strongly embedded in our vision.



We fulfill our mandates through three main activities:

- POPULAR EDUCATION
- ADVOCACY
- NETWORKING

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VIEW FROM THE OFFICE

Last year was a year of transition, change, knowledge transfer, adjustment, and adaptation. These internal shifts became a catalyst for external activities and the development of partnerships and collaborative projects.

A significant event was the departure of Jennifer Beeman, who decided to pursue new opportunities after more than ten years of dedicated service. Jennifer's leadership since joining us in April 2014 has been transformative. Jennifer proved to be the right leader at the right time, instrumental in consolidating our knowledge, successes, and elevating our impact. Recognizing the changing realities of community work, breast cancer research, and the growing urgency of environmental justice, Jennifer particularly emphasized working alongside marginalized communities. She stressed the importance of developing programs specifically designed to center the lived experiences and address the unique needs of equity-denied groups, ensuring their voices were heard and valued in our work. She expanded our advocacy efforts significantly, including crucial work on CEPA reform, and elevating our voice in both community and governmental spheres.

Beyond the visible achievements, we recognize the immense unseen effort that enabled Jennifer to confidently champion complex issues: the countless hours of research, the late nights spent poring over reports, the dedication required to translate intricate scientific concepts into accessible language, whether for a workshop with teenagers or a presentation to government leaders advocating for the right to a healthy environment. These unseen efforts formed the foundation of her impactful work. To honor her legacy, we held a special event celebrating her achievements and ongoing influence.

Following Jennifer's departure, the board undertook an in-depth review of our internal structure. Recognizing that small nonprofits like ours often operate with limited staff covering diverse roles, often leading to burnout, the board decided to shift to a co-management model. This involved creating four dedicated positions aligned with our strategic priorities:

- Popular Education and Advocacy Coordinator
- Finances and Community Engagement Coordinator
- Communications and Partnership Coordinator
- Strategic Development Coordinator

The Finances and Communications positions were offered to existing team members, Viorica Lorcencova and Naoual Laaroussi, respectively, who welcomed the learning and challenges these new opportunities presented.

Viorica returned from maternity leave in mid-July and immediately caught up, ensuring a smooth annual audit, administration, and donor/membership relations. Her deep knowledge of the organization, attention to detail, and commitment to accountability were crucial to maintaining our financial stability during this period. Grounded and solution-oriented, Viorica brings clarity and structure to our operations—we are deeply grateful for her consistent, rigorous, and generous presence.

Naoual continued to be a rock for BCAQ, showing resilience, reliability, diplomacy, and intelligence throughout this period of crucial organizational changes. We are grateful and proud to have her on the team. Naoual excels at organization, demonstrating autonomy and efficiently managing her responsibilities. Thanks to her rigorous planning, creativity, and organizational skills, BCAQ's communications have significantly improved. Her ability to manage stress, especially during the internal changes, has been remarkable, ensuring the continuity of our communication efforts despite limited support for a long period of time.

The other two positions were filled by fabulous new team members: Milena Gioia as Popular Education and Advocacy Coordinator, and Péguy Flore Pierre as Strategic Development Coordinator.

Milena, not completely new to BCAQ, was briefly involved with us in 2016 and was glad to return. They are trilingual and passionate about social justice and intersectional feminism. With over ten years of Montreal community experience and a Master's in International Development and Feminist Studies, they have ensured the success of several innovative feminist and community mental health projects. Milena is delighted to contribute to BCAQ's remarkable mission and take concrete action to improve community and environmental health, focusing on the experience of marginalized groups. Milena's personality perfectly fits their role, demonstrating a strong ability to defend their point of view and express concerns. Their intervention at the government hearing on breast cancer screening, just three weeks after arriving, was remarkable.

Péguy joined us with a wealth of experience and passion, but unfortunately, shortly after, had to take leave due to health concerns. Originally from Haiti, Péguy brought a diverse skillset to BCAQ which spanned management, communication, education, culture, and the arts, underpinned by degrees in Management and Education, and she took on responsibilities for strategic development at BCAQ.

During Péguy's extended leave of about 5 months, her responsibilities were temporarily distributed amongst the existing team, demonstrating their commitment to ensuring continuity while we explored options to accommodate her situation. However, after careful assessment of BCAQ's long-term strategic needs and the level of ongoing support required, we made the difficult decision to restructure, which regrettably resulted in the elimination of Péguy's position. While Péguy's time with us was brief, we thank her for her initial contributions, and the Board has committed to increased involvement in strategic development and planning to ensure a strong path forward.

Like any partnership, it takes time for new members to find their footing and build strong, collaborative relationships. We're grateful to have fostered a space of trust, respect, and openness, which has helped us develop a cohesive and supportive team. We value our culture of comanagement, making decisions together, listening with care, and always prioritizing what's best for our organization and the communities we serve.

THE WORKING TEAM

From left to right:

- Jennifer Beeman, Programs and Advocacy Coordinator (Until November 1, 2024)
- Viorica Lorcencova, Finances and Community Engagement Coordinator
- Naoual Laaroussi, Communications and Partnerships Coordinator
- Péguy Flore C. Pierre, Strategic Development Coordinator (From September 30, 2024 to June 2025)
- Milena Gioia, Popular Education and Advocacy Coordinator (Since September 30, 2024)



REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The 2024-2025 year was marked by a profound transformation of our organization. Following the departure of the Executive Director, BCAQ chose to strengthen its operations through a shared coordination model—a more collective and horizontal structure that reflects our feminist and decolonial values.

Two new members joined the team this year, Péguy Flore Pierre and Milena Gioia, reinforcing our capacity for action and bringing valuable perspectives to our work. Their arrival contributed to internal discussions on how we operate and supported the rollout of numerous awareness-raising and mobilization activities.

The Board of Directors met seven times during the year, as well as on several occasions in smaller committees, to accompany this reorganization, support the team in implementing shared coordination, and ensure the organization's strategic continuity.

On the political front, BCAQ remained active. We continued to speak out publicly in defense of environmental health, social justice, and breast cancer prevention. We called on the federal government regarding PFAS and plastics, denounced the cancer industry and its contradictions, addressed racism in healthcare, and reaffirmed the importance of public policies that tackle the root causes of disease. The team also participated in the 2025 Feminist Fair and organized thematic workshops such as *Our Bodies, Our Environment*, continuing our mission of popular education.

These multiple initiatives reflect a year of intense mobilization in which our voice resonated both in political arenas and community spaces. However, this sustained pace now calls for a moment of pause to better consolidate our achievements. The coming year will therefore be dedicated to internal restructuring, clarifying our strategic directions, strengthening member

engagement, and diversifying our funding sources to ensure the sustainability of our work.

Because the struggle is far from over: environmental and health issues remain urgent, and we must continue to raise our voices for a vision of health that is just, inclusive, feminist, and free from toxins.

The Board of Directors warmly thanks the team members, our allies, and everyone whose involvement and support allow BCAQ to continue its mission with strength and determination.

Amira Bensahli

President,
On behalf of the Board of Directors

Board members-from left to right:

- Amira Bensahli, President
- Marie Nikette Lorméus, Vice president
- Catherine Poirtas, Secretary
- Nancy Guberman, Treasurer
- Helen Kinsella, Administrator
- Eugénie Fontaine, Administrator



BREAST CANCER PREVENTION: POPULAR EDUCATION AND MOBILIZATIONS

Authentic Conversation - September 25, 2024



As part of our "Authentic Conversations" series, we organized a powerful roundtable discussion on women's health in conflict zones, highlighting the specific experiences of women living with chronic illness. Moderated by Amira Bensahli, the discussion brought together three committed speakers – Zahia El-Masri, social justice activist; Marie Hatem, Full Professor at the School of Public Health of the Université de Montréal; and Alana Malinde S.N. Lancaster, lawyer and specialist in human rights and natural resources. Together, they addressed the effects of war on women's health, the challenges faced by refugee women, decolonial approaches to health, and avenues for individual and collective action. This impactful exchange underscored the importance of feminist solidarity, health justice, and the inclusion of situated knowledge to address the complex health issues experienced by women in conflict settings.

Watch the replay on YouTube

October Awareness Campaign: My Breasts and My Uterus Count Too! – October 2024

For Breast Cancer Awareness Month, BCAQ continued its commitment to health justice by relaunching, alongside Moelle épinière et motricité Québec (MEMO-Qc) and Action Femmes et Handicap (AFH), the *My Breasts and My Uterus Count Too!* campaign.



This mobilization builds on our joint campaign launched in 2023, which aimed to shed light on the inequalities experienced by women with disabilities in the health care system. Once again this year, we called on the Government of Quebec to address the unacceptable inaccessibility of oncology, gynecological, and perinatal care for these women. Due to the lack of adapted medical equipment, women with disabilities continue to be excluded from basic health services. Through this campaign, we denounced this structural inequality and demanded concrete action to ensure equitable access to care for all women

Read our latest press release.

Project: Stopping our Plastics Disaster - October to December 2024

As a critical alternative to October's Pink Month. BCAQ launched a groundbreaking project combining health, social justice, and environmental justice: Saving Ourselves, Saving Our Planet: Stopping Our Plastics Disaster. This initiative aimed to educate and mobilize people against the destructive effects of plastics on health, marginalized communities, and the environment.



Through digital popular education campaign, we raised awareness about the links

more sustainable future.







In the context of the international negotiations on the plastics treaty in Busan, South Korea, in December 2024, we:

- Led an online mobilization and an educational campaign on social media;
- Sent a joint letter to Minister Steven Guilbeault, along with 31 Quebec organizations, calling for a strong Canadian stance against the export of waste to the Global South and for a global reduction in plastic production;
- Participated in a roundtable organized by Environment and Climate Change Canada, where we presented our recommendations and reiterated the request for an official meeting with the minister to ensure post-treaty follow-up.

This project marked an important milestone in BCAQ's commitment to primary prevention of chronic diseases and to public policies that address the environmental injustices experienced by women and the most vulnerable communities.



With the support of the Dragonfly Fund, a Phase 2 of the project will be launched in fall 2025 to continue our

efforts in awareness-raising, citizen mobilization, and political action on these critical issues.

We warmly thank the Dragonfly Fund for its renewed support, which makes it possible to continue this essential work in environmental health, social justice, and community engagement.

Illustrations by Niti Marcelle Mueth



Project: Transformations and Internal Dynamics in Feminist Organizations – Workshop 1: Organizational Cultures and Structures – February 26, 2025

On February 26, 2025, BCAQ successfully co-organized the first online workshop of the Transformations and Internal Dynamics in Feminist Organizations project, focusing on organizational structures and cultures. Held in collaboration with an <u>interdisciplinary partner team from the UQAM/Relais-femmes Protocol</u>, the workshop brought together 51 participants out of 65 registrants and fostered rich and engaged exchanges. A second workshop, entitled Demystifying the Role of Conflict within Feminist Organizations, will take place in person in Montreal on November 5, 2025. This project aims to foster collective reflection on the internal practices of our movements and to strengthen our organizational capacities from a feminist and transformative perspective.

Feminist Tea and Booth: Our Bodies, Our Environment – IREF Feminist Fair – February 27, 2025

On February 27, 2025, BCAQ took part in the Feminist Fair organized by the Institut de recherches et d'études féministes (IREF) by hosting a Feminist Tea entitled Our Bodies, Our Environment. This exchange space explored the links between environmental health, social justice, and women's





health, sparking critical reflections and dynamic discussions with participants. Throughout the day, our team also hosted a booth to present our mission, projects, and educational tools to an engaged, intergenerational audience.

#FeministForTheEnvironment Campaign – International Women's Rights Day – March 8, 2025

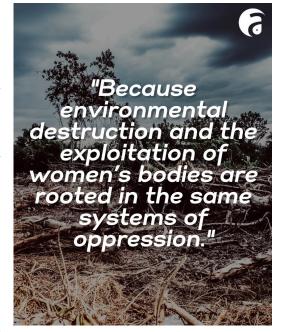
From February 26 to March 10, 2025, BCAQ led a digital campaign for International Women's Rights Day (March 8) under the hashtag #FeministForTheEnvironment. This initiative aimed to highlight the connections between feminism, environmental justice, and health justice, emphasizing the gendered impacts of ecological and health crises as well as the central role of women in the fight for a sustainable future.



The campaign served as a reminder that women – particularly marginalized women – are often on the front lines of environmental crises: increased exposure to toxic pollutants, unequal access to care in ecological disaster contexts, and the mental burden of family management in times of crisis. These realities underscore the importance of an intersectional approach that integrates environmental health into feminist advocacy.

The online mobilization marked was by powerful testimonies shedding light on everyday inequalities. A contest was also organized, with the book The Nature of Catherine Injustice by Sabaa Khan and Hallmich awarded to the winner.

This campaign is fully aligned with our mission to raise awareness about the connections between the environment, women's health, and social justice, with the goal of building inclusive and equitable collective solutions.



OUR WORKSHOPS



BCAQ offers several workshops on primary prevention, environmental health, and social justice:

- Our Bodies, Our Environment
- Breast Cancer and Racialized Women: Education and Prevention
- Environmental Health Jeopardy!
- The Beast of Beauty
- Youth Program: Young Leaders and Environmental Health
- Prevention and Action against Cancer and Toxicants (PACT)
- Becoming a Chemical Detective, Tips for a toxic-free home
- From Anger to Compliance: What Remains of a Feminist Critique of Breast Cancer?

These workshops aim to shed light on environmental inequalities related to breast cancer and to strengthen the agency of the most affected communities. They are available on request in various settings. Contact us to learn more.

Workshop: Our Bodies, Our Environment - March 12, 2025

On March 12, 2025, BCAQ facilitated the Our Bodies, Our Environment workshop at the Entre Ailes Women's Centre in Sainte-Julie. Twelve engaged participants actively contributed to the discussions, sharing their reflections and experiences, thereby enriching the collective dynamic. This workshop is part of our ongoing efforts to raise awareness about the connections between women's health and the environment.



Workshop: The Beast of Beauty – June 9, 2025



On June 9, 2025, **BCAQ** led workshop at the Centre d'éducation et d'action des femmes (CÉAF) focused on cosmetics, endocrine disruptors, and beauty standards. This critical exchange space to deconstruct the created promises of the cosmetics industry, analyze the hidden ingredients with harmful effects. and encourage thoughtful reflection on our

consumption choices and their impact on health. We thank the CÉAF for this collaboration and all participants for their engagement.

Workshops: Our Bodies, Our Environment – June 11, 2025

At the Congrès annuel de L'R centres femmes des de Quebec City, BCAQ led two workshops facilitated by our colleague Milena. bringing together than more participants in the morning and 25 in the afternoon. These workshops explored the impacts of toxic products on the health of





women and gender-diverse people, with a particular focus on the links between endocrine disruptors and breast cancer. Through a feminist and inclusive approach, the discussions also addressed issues of environmental and bodily justice. We thank the R for the invitation and all participants for their engagement and enriching exchanges.

Participation in the Balades féministes Podcast – IREF

As part of the IREF Feminist Fair, Milena took part in the recording of episode 9 of the Balades féministes podcast (in French only), entitled Feminisms on Living Land: Between Ecology, Struggles, and Indigenous Knowledge. This episode explores the deep connections between the environment and feminism, local initiatives addressing ecological challenges, and Indigenous perspectives as drivers of transformation. An essential conversation to which we are proud to have contributed.



BREAST CANCER PREVENTION: ADVOCACY

Bill S-5 and the Coalition for Action on Toxics

The 2024-2025 year marked the second year of implementation of Bill S-5: An Act to Strengthen Environmental Protection for a Healthy Canada, adopted in June 2023. This period remains crucial, as several regulatory tools mandated by the law still need to be defined, such as the framework for the right to a healthy environment and the creation of a watchlist for chemicals of concern.

BCAQ has remained fully engaged in the Coalition for Action on Toxics (CAT), which plays a key role in citizen monitoring, participation in public consultations, and the formulation of policy recommendations.

On December 11, 2024, Milena represented BCAQ at CAT's strategic planning day in Toronto. This meeting provided an opportunity for collective reflection on the coalition's priorities for the coming year, to strengthen intersectoral alliances, and to develop joint strategies for the elimination of toxic substances.

Funded by Dragonfly Ventures, CAT brings together civil society organizations working to protect environmental health, with particular attention to the impacts of toxic substances on women, children, and marginalized communities.



The Dragonfly Fund

Participation in the Canadian Symposium on Environmental Justice and Racism – September 13–14, 2024

BCAQ participated in a symposium organized by Environment and Climate Change Canada, aimed at contributing to the development of a national strategy to prevent, assess, and combat environmental racism. It was an opportunity to amplify the voices of racialized women and marginalized

communities disproportionately exposed to environmental toxins, plastic waste, and industrial pollution. We highlighted the importance of recognizing the gendered impact of environmental racism, particularly on women's health, and of strengthening the involvement of community groups in the development of environmental public policies.

Presentation to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women – October 21, 2024

As part of the study on breast cancer screening for women in their forties, BCAQ was invited to provide testimony before the Standing Committee on the Status of Women in the House of Commons. Jennifer Beeman and Milena Gioia presented the systemic issues related to screening, inequalities in access to care, and the specific impacts on



marginalized communities. Their intervention amplified the voices of those affected and offered concrete recommendations for a more equitable and inclusive public health approach.

Watch the session online

Also consult our position paper: <u>Expanding breast cancer screening</u> programs to women and people starting at 40: BCAQ Has Questions (May 27, 2024)

Participation in the INESSS Committee – Breast Cancer Screening – January & May 2025



Our colleague Milena represented BCAQ on the INESSS follow-up committee, addressing issues related to the inclusion of women aged 40 to 49 in Quebec's breast cancer screening program. During the January and May 2025 meetings, Milena brought an intersectional feminist perspective focused on health

equity, emphasizing the importance of clear information, informed consent, and equitable access to quality care for all women and individuals who may develop breast cancer, taking into account social and structural inequalities.

Fighting the Proliferation of PFAS – A First Victory on March 5, 2025



After years of advocating for of regulation toxic stronger substances, particularly PFAS, a first victory was achieved in March 2025. The federal government announced its intention to classify PFAS-these "forever chemicals"-as under the substances Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA).

BCAQ was present at the official announcement in Montreal, alongside members of the Coalition for Action on Toxics (ACME, Ecojustice, Environmental Defence, David Suzuki Foundation).

This is a major step forward in the fight against these substances, which are linked to numerous health problems (cancers, hormonal disorders, infertility, etc.). We now call for a complete ban on PFAS in consumer products to truly protect the population and the environment. The mobilization continues for a future free of PFAS.

Read our press release.



2025 Federal Elections: 3 Questions to Protect Public Health from Toxic Substances – April 2025

Ahead of the April 2025 federal elections, BCAQ, together with the Coalition for Action on Toxics (CAT), questioned the main political parties about their commitments regarding plastic pollution, PFAS, and chemical management. This initiative aimed to better inform the public about the parties' positions on critical issues of public health and environmental justice.

2025 FEDERAL ELECTION - PARTIES' ENVIRONMENT PLEDGES

Where do parties stand on environmental issues? We asked. Here's what they told us.

Now that Mark Carney's Liberal government is in place, we will continue our monitoring and advocacy work to ensure these commitments translate into ambitious policies that match the scale of the health and environmental challenges.

Read our full article and the parties' responses.

Amplifying Community Voices to the New Government - May-June 2025

Following the federal elections, BCAQ co-signed several advocacy letters to newly appointed government officials, in collaboration with allies in health, environment, and social justice. These actions aimed to underscore the urgency of protecting the public from toxic substances and to advocate for truly inclusive and feminist public policies.

Two letters were addressed to the Honourable Marjorie Michel, the new Minister of Health, highlighting systemic health inequalities experienced by women, racialized and Indigenous people, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and those

living with disabilities or in precarious situations, while emphasizing the importance of considering social and environmental determinants of health. The Coalition for Action on Toxics, along with other organizations, also alerted the minister to the need for stronger regulation of hazardous substances, such as PFAS.

An official letter was also sent to Prime Minister Mark Carney, advocating for the reinstatement of ministries dedicated to Gender Equality and



Diversity, and for strong policies against plastic pollution and toxic exposures. We also welcomed the appointment of the new Minister of Environment, Julie Dabrusin, while outlining our expectations for an ambitious shift toward environmental justice and public health.

These interventions build on years of advocacy for environmental and health justice, guided by a commitment to collective rights and dialogue. We continue our political work to amplify the voices of the most affected communities and demand sustainable systemic change.

STRATEGIC REFLECTIONS

This past year has been marked by significant internal reflection and a strategic reorientation for BCAQ. The departure of our long-time director and colleague, Jennifer Beeman, served as a catalyst for an in-depth review of our organizational structure and priorities. This process strengthened our commitment to our mission while highlighting the need to adapt and innovate in an ever-changing context.

CO-MANAGEMENT MODEL AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The shift to a co-management model represents a major strategic decision aimed at fostering a more sustainable and collaborative work environment. Aware of the risk of burnout within small nonprofit organizations, we sought, through this new structure, to distribute responsibilities more equitably and allow each team member to contribute with their unique skills and perspectives.

As part of this transition, an HR committee was established within the Board of Directors in September 2024, followed by a posting and recruitment process that led to the arrival of Milena Gioia and Péguy Flore Pierre at BCAQ on October 1, 2024. Knowledge transfer and training took place from October to November 2024, followed by the official departure of Jennifer Beeman on November 1, 2024. We also participated in two comanagement training sessions with our Chair, Amira Bensahli, on November 20 and December 9, 2024, and have maintained biweekly comanagement meetings since then.

The successful integration of Milena and Péguy (even though her tenure was brief), along with the continued commitment of Viorica Lorcencova and Naoual Laaroussi, demonstrates the team's adaptability and dedication. We continue actively adjusting our co-management model to ensure clear communication, shared decision-making, and a supportive work environment for all.

KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION AND INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING



We recognize the importance of preserving and leveraging the expertise and knowledge accumulated by BCAQ over the past decade. The establishment of a structured knowledge mobilization system, initiated by Jennifer Beeman,

represents a crucial step in ensuring the continuity of our work and supporting the development of our team. This internal resource will allow current and future members to access past research, presentations, and advocacy tools, adapt them for new projects, and enrich our organizational knowledge base.

Moreover, our participation in various workshops and webinars demonstrates our commitment to continuous learning and professional development. These activities have included, notably:

- Montreal Health Ethics Conference Series
- Webinar: Playing by the Rules: Electoral Guide for Charitable Organizations - February 5, 2025

- Webinar: Plastics, Chemicals, and Cancer: The Role of the Global Plastics Treaty in Preventing Breast Cancer - February 27, 2025
- Breast Cancer Awareness Panel for Black Communities – Côtedes-Neiges Black Community Association – February 27, 2025

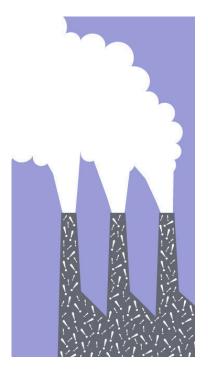


- Environmental Justice Webinar Series (ECCC) February 6 to March 27, 2025
- Training: Introduction to Gender Diversity (Divergenres) March 24,
 2025
- Understanding the Intersections of Ageism, Heterosexism, and Gender Bias in Service Delivery for 2SLGBTQIA+ Older Adults (Gay and Grey Montreal) – March 26, 2025
- Inclusive Writing Training (Sandrine Bourget-Lapointe) April 1, 2025
- Countering Anti-Feminism and Regressive Movements in Canada (The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform) - April 16, 2025
- Post-Election Policy Priorities (The Chanterelle Alliance for Feminist Law Reform) - May 22, 2025

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Looking ahead, BCAQ remains committed to its core strategic priorities:

Prevention: Continue and expand our popular education initiatives to raise awareness of the environmental and social determinants of breast cancer, with a particular focus on marginalized communities. Phase 2 of our



plastics project, supported by the Dragonfly Fund, represents a key pillar of this strategy.

Advocacy: Strengthen our advocacy efforts to promote policies that protect public health and address environmental injustices. Our victory regarding PFAS, as well as our engagement during the federal elections, demonstrates our commitment to holding policymakers accountable.

Partnerships: Develop and expand our network of partners who share our values. A first strategic reflection session with the Board of Directors and the team took place on March 16, 2025, followed by a second session on June 9, 2025. The feminist

coalition project for environmental health represents a major step toward a stronger, more structured, and coordinated movement for change.

Internal Development: Considering the experiences of the past year, we are committed to strengthening our internal structures and processes to ensure sustainability and long-term impact of our work. Key activities in this area included:

- Board Engagement: The creation of a fundraising committee, composed of Helen Kinsella and the team in March 2025, along with the human resources training offered to Board members in September 2024, demonstrated their active involvement. Two
 - strategic meetings with the team and the Board took place on March 16 and June 9, 2025, to actively collaborate on strategic planning.
- Financial Planning: From February to May 2025, active research for funding opportunities was conducted, alongside the development of a financial planning and monitoring tool to structure our fundraising efforts.



financial planning and monitoring tool to structure our fundraising efforts.

- Coalition Building: The new team reviewed the dialogues from the previous year, funded by the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation, and prepared a preliminary plan to advance the creation of an environmental health coalition in May 2025.
- Annual Planning: Following Péguy's departure in June 2025, significant work was devoted to developing the annual plan for the upcoming year.

The events of the past year have presented both challenges and opportunities for BCAQ. By adopting a co-management model, prioritizing knowledge mobilization, focusing on internal and external development, and remaining centered on our strategic priorities, we are confident in our ability to continue making a meaningful impact on the lives of women and communities affected by breast cancer and environmental injustices.

NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Networking and partnerships remain at the heart of BCAQ's work. We devote a significant portion of our energy to these collaborations, convinced that they strengthen our actions by fostering the development of joint projects, mutual support in our advocacy campaigns, and the exchange of essential information and expertise. They also allow us to support and recognize the indispensable work carried out by numerous organizations that share our values.

In a spirit of co-construction and collective engagement, we aspire to establish, in the near future, a feminist coalition on environmental health, bringing together partners and allies around a shared vision of social, health, and environmental justice.



The Coalition for Action on Toxics (CAT) brings together environmental health and environmental advocacy organizations committed to stronger regulation of toxic substances in Canada.

BCAQ is the only officially feminist organization within the Coalition and plays an active, ongoing role. Our official representatives, Naoual and Milena, participate in weekly meetings, contribute to joint strategies, ensure follow-up between sessions, and integrate an intersectional feminist perspective into the Coalition's work, particularly by highlighting the differentiated impacts of toxic substances on women, marginalized

individuals, and racialized communities. As a Quebec-based organization, we also provide an essential bilingual contribution: translating documents and communications into French and amplifying the voices and concerns of Quebec populations within this pan-Canadian dialogue.

UQAM Relais-Femmes Protocol



Naoual represented BCAQ on the steering committee for the project Transformations and Internal Dynamics in Feminist Organizations, a collective initiative stemming from the UQAM Relais-Femmes Protocol. This committee. which brings together feminist researchers, workers. activists. provides valuable reflexivity the internal on organizational of processes women's and feminist groups in

Quebec.

In 2024-2025, several key milestones were reached, including a comprehensive literature review, a rapid consultation within feminist circles (which gathered over 80 responses—a strong indication of the project's relevance), and the development of a series of workshops addressing the most frequently raised themes by respondents. These steps led to the organization of the first workshop in February 2025.

Naoual also contributed to reviewing a chapter titled Et si on (se) parlait des vraies affaires? Suivre la conception et mise en place d'une réflexion collective sur les transformations des organisations féministes par une pratique réflexive et affective (What If We Talked About the Real Issues? Following the Design and Implementation of a Collective Reflection on Transformations in Feminist Organizations through Reflexive and Affective Practice), part of a forthcoming collective work on intersectional feminist

governance, to be published in the fall. This chapter was written by members of the steering committee, primarily Gabriela Rabello, Ph.D. candidate and active member of the committee.

Groupe des Treize (G13)

BCAQ continued its involvement within the G13, a strategic space for reflection and mobilization within the feminist movement. The organization was first represented by Péguy and later by Milena, who brought forward a vision of intersectional feminism



forward a vision of intersectional feminism rooted in the struggles for social, environmental, and health justice.

Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal

Milena represented BCAQ at the Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal (TGFM), including active participation in the health subcommittee. They also contributed to discussions on TGFM's strategic directions during the planning meeting in June 2025, continuing the involvement initiated by the team in previous years.

Gender, Health, and Environment Collective



As a founding member of the Gender, Health, and Environment Collective, BCAQ continued to play an active role this year. Jennifer and Milena represented the organization by engaging in collective reflections with other members of the collective-which brings together feminist groups health and environment. as well as researchers-and by contributing to the organization of activist activities and knowledgesharing initiatives.

This year, the collective also began creating a podcast series on the mental load of women. Recordings took place in mid-June, and a brainstorming session on distribution is planned for the fall, pending final editing.

COLLABORATION ON RESEARCH PROJECTS

Research Project: "Investigating Breast Cancer Risk in Personal Care Professions: Toward Better Prevention and Protection"



BCAQ is collaborating on a CIHR funding application with Professor Dr. Isabelle Plante and interdisciplinary (biologists, toxicologists, epidemiologists, and community science experts) to study breast cancer risk related to exposure to endocrine disruptors among workers personal care (hairdressers, estheticians, nail technicians). This project integrates an intersectional perspective by considering the specific impacts on women and

marginalized communities to better understand multiple exposures and develop inclusive prevention strategies. BCAQ contributes its community expertise and supports mobilization around these issues.

BCAQ is a member of the following organizations, coalitions, and partnerships:

- Co-savoir, anciennement CDEACF
- The Coalition for Action on Toxics
- Collectif Genre, Santé, Environnement, UQAM
- · Comité RAGU du RAFSSS
- UQAM Relais-Femmes Protocol
- Réseau d'action des femmes en santé et services sociaux (RAFSSS)
- Regroupement des organisations communautaires en oncologie (ROCO)
- · Relais-femmes
- Réseau québécois d'action pour la santé des femmes (RQASF)
- Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal (TGFM)
- The Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice (CCECJ)
- The Coalition for Environmental Rights
- The Coalition "Victimes des pesticides du Québec"
- Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ)
- Groupe des 13 (G13)
- Vivre 100 fibrome

We also thank the following organizations for their support and collaboration:

- The Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)
- DisAbled Women's Network of Canada (DAWN)
- Environmental Defence Canada
- The David Suzuki Foundation
- R des centres de femmes du Québec
- Regroupement Naissance Renaissance (RNR)
- · Relais-femmes
- UQAM-Relais Femmes Protocol
- The Women's Healthy Environments Network (WHEN)
- L'environnement, c'est intersectionnel
- Quebec Native Women Inc.
- Black Environmental Initiative (BE Initiative)
- Réseau des femmes en environnement (RFE)
- Le Centre des femmes Femmes du Monde CDN
- Co-savoir, anciennement CDEACF
- Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ)
- Moelle Epinière et Motricité Québec (MÉMO-Qc)
- Ligue des droits et libertés
- Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal (TGFM)
- Réseau d'action des femmes en santé et services sociaux (RAFSSS)

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2024–2025, BCAQ continued implementing its engaged, feminist, and bilingual communications strategy under Naoual's coordination. The year was marked by the strengthening of our digital presence, the adaptation of our content to different audiences, and the development of online mobilization tools grounded in our values of environmental and social justice and health equity. A major redesign of our website is underway, with a launch planned for fall 2025.

Our Website



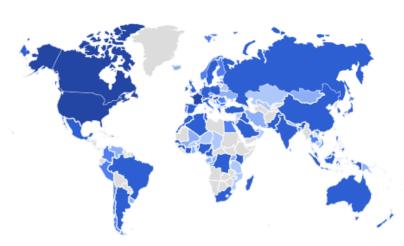
The complete redesign of BCAQ's website, carried out in collaboration with the agency Bête Féroce, represents a major project. Our previous site contained a large amount of important content that needed to be preserved, requiring careful archiving and selection. Together, we designed a new site that is more modern, accessible, and user-friendly for our community, while remaining easy for our team to manage and update. This new tool better reflects our current image and effectively supports our mission and ambitions for the years to come.

Our website is regularly updated in both English and French.

Number of users: 9 282

Number of page views: 17 348

Here are some statistics showing the distribution of our users:



COUNTRY	ACTIVE USERS
Canada	4.1K
United States	2.5K
France	939
United Kingdom	138
China	117
India	107
Philippines	87

Our Social Media

Total followers on BCAQ's Facebook pages (1,804) and FemmeToxic (1,026): **2 830**

Facebook post reach: 10 838

Total followers on our Instagram account: **256**

Instagram post reach: 3 566

Total followers on BCAQ's LinkedIn page: 563



This year, our social media presence continued to play a key role in our awareness-raising and popular education efforts. Despite the inactivity of the FemmeToxic Facebook page since 2023, the total reach of our Facebook posts increased significantly, from 851 to 10,838 views. On Instagram, the number of followers grew by 45%, and post reach increased nearly ninefold over the year, reflecting growing engagement with our content. Our LinkedIn page also gained visibility, with a steady growth in followers (+14%), demonstrating sustained interest from our professional

and community network in our work. Finally, we chose to leave the X platform (formerly Twitter), in alignment with our feminist, anti-racist, and environmental values. These data demonstrate our ability to amplify our messages on environmental health and breast cancer.

Press Coverage - BCAQ in the Media



Articles in which BCAQ was mentioned or interviewed:

- October 10, 2024 <u>Cancer du sein :</u> <u>un risque différencié chez les femmes</u> <u>noires</u>
- October 22, 2024 <u>Quebec's wait</u> for breast cancer surgery has never been this long
- February 17, 2025 <u>Pesticides : des</u>
 <u>Canadiens fichés par une firme avec</u>

 <u>l'argent de Washington</u> (quoted in an article on pesticide lobbying)

Article authored by BCAQ members:

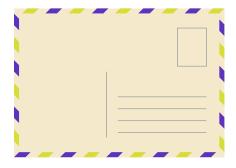
February 4, 2025 – <u>Cancer et</u>
 environnement : un lien toxique ignoré

Newsletters

This year, we sent 26 newsletters in French and English to our 764 subscribers to keep them informed about our campaigns, events, and positions. We continued our work in public education and mobilization, repurposing content for our social media and website. The new format launched last year allows us to better structure our messages and strengthen our visual identity.

Reviewing Our Mailing Strategies

As the majority of our members are now subscribed to our electronic newsletter, we are reassessing the use of postal mail. Some individuals still prefer to receive our communications in paper form, and we aim to respect these preferences.



We plan to conduct a survey to better understand the needs of our supporters and adjust our practices accordingly.

In 2024, only one paper letter was sent: our year-end appeal, sharing the team's personal motivations and seeking support from our members. However, a Canada Post strike delayed its distribution, affecting the launch of our campaign. We are considering strategies to prevent such delays in the future.

FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT: SUSTAINING OUR MISSION

Provincial Core Funding

BCAQ is grateful to receive recurrent funding from the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux through the **Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires (PSOC)**. While the funding amount is not sufficient to cover all costs necessary for adequate staffing, overhead, and other operating expenses, it remains a vital source of support for our organization. In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, our PSOC grant amounted to \$129,627, underscoring its crucial role in sustaining our mission.

Individual Donations and Membership Fees



Financial stability remains a critical challenge for many non-profit organizations, and BCAQ is no exception. With insufficient recurrent government funding, we rely heavily on the generosity and dedication of our donors and members, some of whom have supported us for decades. We deeply value this privilege, recognizing that their

contributions represent not only financial assistance, but also an invaluable expression of trust in the importance and impact of our work. This unwavering support fuels our motivation and strengthens our commitment to our mission.

This financial year, we were fortunate to receive financial contributions from 89 individuals. This figure does not include those who donate anonymously. These gifts totaled nearly **\$22,880**, including \$9,296 raised through our Annual Solicitation campaign. We are incredibly grateful for this individual support, which demonstrates the strength of our community.

Private Foundation Funding

BCAQ's core mission is breast cancer prevention, particularly the oftenoverlooked environmental factors. Securing funding for this approach can be challenging, as many still view breast cancer as solely a hereditary disease or attribute risk factors primarily to individual lifestyle choices. The critical role of environmental risks, like toxic substances in our products and the air we breathe, remains underestimated or ignored by many.

Fortunately, this vital link is gaining recognition, and we are grateful to partner with foundations that prioritize environmental health and understand the crucial interconnectedness of human and environmental well-being. Their support allows us to continue our important work in this critical area.

We continued to benefit from the generosity of **Dragonfly Ventures fund**, which provided vital support for:

- Our ongoing participation in the Coalition for Action on Toxics: \$40,000
- Our project Saving Ourselves, Saving Our Planet: Stopping our Plastics
 Disaster: \$30,000

Community Partnerships and Appreciation of Popular Education Work

Our collaborations with like-minded feminist and environmental organizations are crucial for maximizing our impact and benefiting the community. BCAQ is consistently involved in collective initiatives that align with our values and goals.

As part of our commitment to public education, we offer all our workshops free of charge. While we encourage donations, we recognize that many of the communities we work with face funding challenges themselves. We deeply value all forms of appreciation, whether financial or verbal.

In this spirit, we were honored to receive appreciation gifts for our workshops and contributions from:

- UQAM Relais-Femmes Protocol: \$1,200 for our participation in the steering committee of the project Transformations and Internal Dynamics in Feminist Organizations: Toward a Collective Reflection Combining Theoretical, Experiential, and Practical Knowledge.
- UQAM/IREF (Institute for Feminist Research and Studies):
 \$300 for our participation in their Feminist Fair, including



hosting a booth and leading the workshop Our Bodies, Our Environment as part of their Feminist Tea module.

- Centre des femmes Entre-Ailes : \$150 for our workshop Our Bodies, Our Environment.
- L'R des centres de femmes du Québec : \$800 for the double workshop Our Bodies, Our Environment during their annual conference.

We deeply appreciate these contributions, which demonstrate the value our partners place on our work.

Discretionary Funds

In january 2025, we reached out to several members of the National Assembly, requesting support for our capacity-building initiatives. Specifically, we sought assistance to provide training for our team, aiming to strengthen our new co-management structure and develop more inclusive processes, ensuring that our work follows a genuinely intersectional approach. These trainings will be essential to adapt our approaches, workshops, and activities to better meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve. Investing in these training opportunities will allow BCAQ to significantly enhance its services, responding more effectively to growing demand and the urgent need for an inclusive and

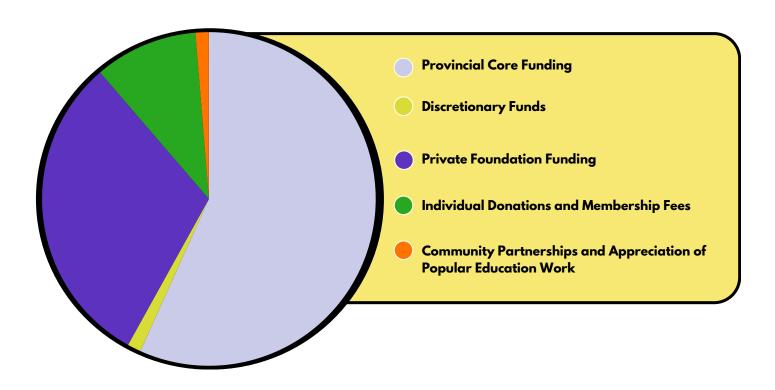
equitable approach. We are pleased to announce that two ministers responded positively. We remain firmly committed to prioritizing our team's training needs and continuing our efforts to secure the necessary resources.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous contributions of:

- Christian Dubé, Minister of Health: \$2,000
- François Legault, Premier of Québec: \$1,000

Breakdown of Our Funding Sources – Fiscal Year 2024-2025

The chart below illustrates the diversity of our funding sources this year. It reflects the importance of community, institutional, and philanthropic support in carrying out our mission.



Looking Ahead: A Promising New Fundraising Idea



We are excited to share an early glimpse of a promising new fundraising idea that we believe holds great potential for the future, thanks to the wonderful generosity of Susan, a former board member and long-time friend of BCAQ. Susan, drawing upon her extensive experience in the antique business, has offered to donate a remarkable collection of vintage clothing and bags from her personal collection, spanning the 1960s through the 1990s. While still in the planning stages, our vision is to create a unique fundraising event around these beautiful vintage

pieces, offering a chance to acquire unique items while directly supporting our work in breast cancer awareness and action. We envision an initiative that celebrates timeless style, promotes sustainable fashion, and contributes meaningfully to our mission. We are incredibly grateful to Susan for her vision and support, and we look forward to sharing more details as this exciting idea takes shape!



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our sincerest gratitude to all who support BCAQ. It is through the collective dedication of our members, donors, and volunteers that we are able to maintain our independent voice and continue our vital work. We also express our deep appreciation to the public agencies, private foundations, and individuals whose generous funding empowers our organization to thrive.

Each act of giving fills us with warmth and gratitude. These contributions are powerful affirmations of our work, a resounding vote of confidence that inspires and energizes our team. The consistent support from our monthly donors is particularly crucial, enabling us to plan and execute projects with greater confidence and foresight. For this, we are profoundly grateful.

We extend a special thank you to our longtime supporters – our veteran champions – whose unwavering commitment means the world to us. Your dedicated contributions are greatly valued, and we deeply cherish your steadfast loyalty. Your sustained belief in our work provides a bedrock of stability upon which we can continue to build.

Each year, we are also touched by the influx of new supporters, many of whom choose to donate in honor or memory of loved ones. We are deeply thankful they have chosen to support a cause that places the precautionary principle at the heart of its mission, recognizing the importance of proactive measures to protect health and the environment.

The personal notes that often accompany our supporters' gifts are especially meaningful. Even a simple line can speak volumes, offering powerful encouragement and reminding us of the collective impact we are achieving together. These heartfelt messages serve as a constant source of inspiration, reinforcing the human connection that drives our work.

The dedication of our members to BCAQ and its committees translates to over 480 hours of invaluable investment. This encompasses internal communication, meeting participation and preparation, text translation, and various other crucial contributions.

- 16 volunteers
- 480 volunteer hours
- 176 members



BCAQ Individual Donors:

David Alper Shelley Freeman Catherine Milne Avis Antel Toby Morantz Nathaly Gagnon John Galambos Susan Elizabeth Steffan Apel Lise Gervais Cassie Barker Mullan Sharon Batt Sarah Gilbert Joanna Nash Michael Beall William Gilsdorf Lise Parent Laurene Bennett Miriam Ginestier Terrve Perlman Thérèse Blais-Brydon Gombay Tina Petratos Brouillette Charles Gradinger Hélène Pétrin Deborah Bonney Nancy Guberman Catherine Poitras-Gillian Bowman llana Haller Auger Carolyn Bradner Judith Quinn Helene Hayes Mary Chaillé Brown Cunningham Alison Burns Gabriella Hochmann Birnam Joseph Caron Louise Houle Joan Rossy Naomi Charron Heather Johnson Nicolas Rouleau Vera Kahn Heidi Chernofsky Katherine Kasirer Johanne Saint-Jocelyn Cooper Judith Crawley Patricia Kearns Charles

Ellen Davis

Gordon DeGrandis Deena Dlusy-Apel Helen Donahue Anick Druelle Ruth Dunsky Rena Entus

Beatrice Freder

Maureen Lafrenière Brenda Laow François Legault Tamara Levine Reisa Levine Rochelle Margles Joan McCordick Ken Melamed

Linda Richmond-

Glenn Rubenstein

Carol Secter Anne St-Cerny Frederick Sweet Solange Tremblay Dana Vocisano Elana Wright

As well as 16 donors or members who chose to remain anonymous.



Public agencies, foundations and private companies:

- Centraide du Grand Montréal
- · Centre de femmes Entre Ailes
- Centraide Québec et Chaudière-Appalaches
- · Charities Aid Foundation
- Dragonfly Ventures
- Fondation du Grand Montreal
- Loto-Quebec
- Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux
- PayPal Giving Fund Canada
- SPSICR-CUSM
- Table de concertation du mouvement des femmes de la Mauricie
- Table des groupes de femmes de Montréal
- · The Benevity Community Impact Fund
- · United Way East Ontario
- · Université du Québec à Montréal
- Ville de Montréal





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LinkedIn: Action cancer du sein du Québec/Breast

Cancer Action Quebec