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COCo's office is situated on an island known as Tiohtiá:ke to the Haudenousaunee, as Mooniyang to the Anishinaabeg, and as Montreal to many others. This unceded traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka people has also been a historical meeting place for other Indigenous nations, including the Omâmiwinini or the Algonquin people. Today, Tiohtiá:ke is home to a diverse population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect continued connections with the past, present, and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples in our work, and we are grateful to live and work on this territory.
Who We Are

We are proud that the COCo community is made up of different members of Tiohtiá:ke and Quebec's grassroots and non-profit sectors. The diversity of the people and organizations we collaborate with helps us deepen our thinking and practices on an ongoing basis, which allows us to better achieve our mission and meet the needs of the groups we serve.

Board of Directors
Afreina Noor, Gabrielle Spenard-Bernier, Jessica Wurster, Julia Couture-Glassco, Medjine Antoine-Bellamy, Richenda Grazette, Samuel Raymond, Sara Kendall, Shawna Moore, Sofia Laroussi, Ushana Houston

Staff
Emilia Gonzalez, Janie Janvier, Jeneffer Ndahayo, Madeleine Cohen, Mich (Michèle) Spieler, Naïma Phillips, Parker Mah, Pascale Brunet, Stella Scupal-Hassani

Affiliate Facilitators
Akki Mackay, Alex Megelas, Amanda Vincelli, Carole Muriithi, Carms Ng, Emil Briones, Emily Yee Clare, Erika Munoz, Johanna Tzountzouris, Jon McPhedrn, Kevin Paul, Kira Page, Madeleine Cohen, Miatta Gorvie, Nadia Chaney, Philippe Angers-Trottier, Rehana Tejpar, Rose-Anne St Paul, Sophie Le-Phat Ho, Stan Clarke, Taharima Habib.
Contractual Collaborators

Members
Our heartfelt thanks to the 199 organizational members and 47 individual members from the non-profit sector who are involved in our work. We are grateful for their commitment to the sector and their support for COCo’s actions.
Our Mission
The mission of the Centre for Community Organizations (COCo) is to help build a more socially just world by supporting the health and well-being of community organizations across Quebec. COCo helps to promote the vitality of the province’s community sector by:

- Supporting organizational development
- Offering training
- Developing and disseminating tools and resources
- Strengthening links between non-profit organizations
Our Theory of Change

Over the last 20 years, COCo has maintained a unique commitment to prioritizing deep capacity-building and organizational change over technical or expert-based consulting. We have continued to be one of the few organizations in Quebec offering support to groups working in English and multilingually. As we move forward, we want to use these strengths to meet systemic oppression with systemic change.

We are committed to building the skills, knowledge, and diversity required to meet the needs of grassroots groups and organizations, which face the biggest systemic barriers.

In 2016, we chose two areas of focus that we believe most effectively nurture an inclusive, social-justice oriented community sector in Quebec:

— Bolstering the impact and amplifying the voices of grassroots organizations;
— Strengthening inclusion and diversity within the Quebec community sector by stewarding dialogue and learning in partnership with other partners, coalitions, and training groups.

These areas have since become the pillars of our Theory of Change.

In addition to directly supporting grassroots organizations, COCo has been partnering with funders and other key actors in the community sector. Together, we work to foster an increase in anti-oppressive, anti-racist, and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) practices in the sector. Through events and learning exchanges, we hope to help create the sector our communities deserve.
The Centre for Community Organizations (COCo)

As the community sector continues to adapt to the pandemic and respond to the ever-changing social context, COCo persevered in pursuing its impactful mission. This year saw the organization making an internal adjustment to a new governance structure. Meanwhile, the team reached hundreds of people and groups through its accompaniments and training sessions, and tens of thousands of individuals through its online resources in 2022! We are deeply grateful for the ongoing efforts COCo’s team has put into supporting the community sector while centering its own practices around anti-o and wellbeing.

The significant changes that began in 2021 continued into this year, and the central theme for both the staff and board being “balance”. The consolidating of COCo’s programs with financial needs, the balancing of workloads while navigating through a new governance structure, and the building of the community sector’s capacity as well as COCo’s are some of the noteworthy challenges and successes we encountered in 2022.

In 2021 we created an interim governance structure to streamline day-to-day operations, while creating space for strategic thinking. Mich and Naïma jointly took on the roles of Executive Coordinators and raised the bar. We would like to take this space to recognize their pivotal roles in building operational capacity and a space for conversations, increasing relationship- and trust-building across the organization, and contributing towards stability in an otherwise complex time.

Board Report
We would also like to recognize the remarkable efforts of COCo's entire staff and affiliate teams in helping the organization pivot to maintain its support to groups through this challenging year.

As part of the board’s contribution, the structure hub has been a particularly active group that invested energy in creating the space for ongoing conversations between board members and staff. This manifested in regular check-ins with the team, highlighting the need to focus on trust-building as well as team development. The structure hub illustrated a true commitment to exploring and enhancing our embodiment of anti-oppression practices as a board.

COCo’s board continues to work to align its practices with the organization’s social justice values. In 2022 we devoted more time and space within each board meeting to learn about Indigenous realities, unlearn colonial biases, and stimulate discussion and reflection around those themes.

We also witnessed the importance of our partners throughout the year. As COCo continues to grow and evolve, having support and trust from those who make our work possible is precious. These relationships allowed the organization to respond both to the needs of the community and of its team while investing the necessary time to reflect and learn from its current challenges.

In summary, the board is proud to share that we welcomed 19 new organizational members, increasing our membership by 8% for a total of 246 members. Our dedicated board members held 11 meetings by video conference and 5 via email, contributing 376 volunteer hours to the organization.

This moment of the year is also the perfect opportunity to send deep thanks to Madeleine Cohen for her deep contributions in human resources and collective management. Thank you to Ushana Houston and Julia Couture-Glassco, both board members who ended their terms in 2022. Lastly, a warm welcome to Stella Scupal who joined the Ateliers/C team and to Jeneffer Ndahayo for taking on a full-time position as Communications and Events Coordinator following her part-time role as Project Management Assistant.

Following 3 years in the context of an evolving pandemic and learnings from social movements, much work remains to be done to rebuild our sector. These challenges are present at COCo in our ongoing efforts to both honour our values in our practices and support the health of our staff. However, 2022 has made it possible to go a long way towards healthier, more sustainable practices. We begin 2023 committed, inspired, and hopeful.

Afreina Noor and Gabrielle Spenard-Bernier
For the COCo Board 2022
Following a few challenging years for community groups and organizations across Quebec, including our team, COCo entered a phase of organizational transformation in 2022. In the context of an evolving pandemic and ongoing systemic oppressions, we found ourselves needing to rebuild our team and operations. This led us to engage in deep reflections on how to build more space to enact transformational change, while fostering a sense of connection and collaboration.

While continuing to reach hundreds of community groups across Quebec through our services in 2022, COCo experienced numerous operational challenges. We had spent so much energy supporting other groups in recent years that we had limited energy and resources to attend to our own structures. Our team and activities had outgrown our governance mechanisms, operations, and service delivery systems.

These factors, along with high turnover in 2021, impacted our ability to respond to requests from groups and put undue pressure on our team. Thus in 2022, we focused on reinforcing our operations and setting up governance mechanisms to bring more stability, support programming, and tend to the wellbeing of our team.

Here are some of the steps we took in 2022:

— Recruiting and onboarding two full-time staff members and ten affiliate consultants
— Improving the conditions of our facilitation team by increasing rates and learning opportunities offered to affiliate consultants
— Enhancing the conditions of our staff by increasing wages and access to learning opportunities
— Creating more space for team connection and trust building, such as monthly staff days and a network of peers for our affiliate consultants
— Setting up collaboration mechanisms between the executive coordinators and program staff to address strategic and operational questions
— Reinforcing operations, for example, by strengthening our budgeting, annual planning, and contract intake tools

Working in anti-oppression and organizational health means committing to ongoing learning, accountability, and transformation, as individuals and as an organization. Gradually, we’re building in the space required to hold the complex conversations needed to enact transformational change. We’re learning to embrace vulnerability and work at the pace of trust.

Though we are proud of the strides we made in 2022, we want to acknowledge the privilege that allows us to invest deeply in this work. The progress we made wouldn’t be possible without core funding as well as support from our trust-based funders and Board. We recognize that many organizations do not benefit from such privilege. Many groups and individuals we work with receive pressures from funders, executives, or board members, making it difficult to invest in transformational change. These pressures, taking the form of underfunding, cultures of urgency, expectations of high performance, big impacts, or quick results, can result in barriers to affecting real change.

We also want to acknowledge that groups founded and led by and for Indigenous, Black, racialized, LGBTQI2, and disabled people as well as other marginalized persons experience additional barriers. These include decades of disproportionate underfunding, impacts from systemic racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other forms of oppression, preventing them from accessing equitable resources and reaching their full potential.

That’s why we join our voices to those urging government bodies and funders to allocate more resources to core funding for community groups. In particular, we encourage funders to increase core funding to grassroots groups and organizations by and for marginalized groups to address historical and ongoing systemic inequities.

Finally, we’d like to thank the community groups and individuals we worked with in 2022 for your dedication, resilience, and brilliance. You are a constant source of inspiration.

Naïma Phillips
With the COCo Staff Team
The year in numbers

We carried out 64 contracts with 52 organizations, resulting in services offered to 324 people, and 1078 hours of accompaniment and training provided. These numbers represent a decrease compared with 2021. This is largely due to understaffing and the need to adapt our activities and operations in the context of the pandemic and shifting needs in the community sector.

This year COCo served:

730 people from 292 organizations
We reached **136,242 people and organizations** through our online presence in 2022. While this represents a decrease in the number of people and organizations reached compared with 2021, this number far surpasses our organizational objective of reaching twenty thousand or more people and organizations per year through our online presence.

The video “Walk With Me: A Woman of Colour’s Journey in Nonprofit Organizations” was viewed **1,600 times**, an increase of 100 views compared with 2021.

Our newsletter subscriptions and social media communities all increased in volume.

Our top visited resources this year were related to anti-oppression:

— The “Problem” Woman of Colour in the Workplace
— White Supremacy Culture in Organizations
— The Oppression Tree: Facilitation Tool
The purpose of the Au cœur des actions project is to support COCo in its efforts to build capacity and prioritize wellness in its team.

This project allows us to put in place the necessary steps and mechanisms to:

- Explore and strengthen our operational capacity to support sustainable actions that are adaptable to the evolving needs of community organizations
- Prioritize team well-being and professional development and weave them into our organizational practices
- Maintain the research and development of our anti-oppressive practices
- Train and support changemakers in anti-oppressive practices
- Identify the emerging needs of the sector to further centre them in our actions

This project’s holistic approach will enable COCo to support community groups more sustainably in their ability to address organizational challenges, including the integration of anti-oppressive practices. It has been made possible thanks to support from the Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation.
Organizational development support

At the core of our programming, COCo offers customized consulting services to grassroots groups and community organizations. Groups often come to us seeking change in how they work or fulfill their missions. We work closely with them to establish a strong collaboration, designing flexible processes that meet their needs and realities.

Comprised of training and accompaniment in areas of organizational development, these services can include:

- Multi-year strategic planning, restructuring, and anti-racism work
- Organizational diagnostic, structures, and mission/vision work
- Leadership, board, and human resources coaching and training
- Training in capacity building and accessibility
- Conflict prevention, mediation, and resolution
- Financial management, bylaws, policies, and evaluation

In 2022, we continued to provide organizational development support to community groups. We carried out 40 contracts with 34 organizations, resulting in services offered to 267 individuals, and 894 hours of accompaniment and training provided. Similar to last year, 50% of the groups we worked with were grassroots organizations, a priority in our Theory of Change.
These numbers represent a decrease in the number of contracts and organizations reached compared with 2021. This is due in great part to understaffing as well as the need to devote more time to adapting our activities and operations to an evolving pandemic context.

A few points explain this:

— In the context of the evolving pandemic and social movements, the demand for COCo’s services skyrocketed from 2020 to 2022, resulting in the need to devote more time to sorting and assessing requests from community groups.

— In 2022, we conducted **85 intake calls** through which we connected with groups to discuss their questions, shared about our approach to accompaniment work, and assessed fit between their support needs and our services. These calls were also an opportunity to build relationships and share resources and tools.

— In addition to these factors, the increased complexity and evolving needs of the sector have led to more labor-intensive processes requiring new expertise and a slower pace to carry them out.

Our experience continues to indicate that the demand for organizational development support to community groups remains higher than the sector’s current capacity. As the demand for COCo’s services continues to grow, we are working to reinforce our own capacity while centering long-term, holistic approaches and the well-being of our team.
As part of its organizational support services, COCo offers accompaniments to community groups to support them in planning, implementing, and training for tech solutions. This year, the demand for technology services stabilized following a sharp rise at the start of the pandemic.

COCo completed a total of 24 technology contracts with 19 organizations in 2022.

These numbers represent a decrease compared with 2021. This is due in part to understaffing as well as the need to adjust our services and operations to the evolving pandemic context. For example, since the beginning of the pandemic, groups have adjusted to remote and hybrid work, gaining more familiarity with online meeting platforms, leading to less support requests in this area in 2022.

The most common support requests covered the following topics:

— Website Development and Maintenance
— Database / CRM consultations
— Collaborative Platforms

In addition to these shifts, major developments in funder-lead technology initiatives in the community sector meant that COCo devoted more time to participating in various activities, working groups,
and strategic reflections. For example, our tech team reached **728 people** through their participation as panelists in DATAide webinars, as part of a joint initiative between Centraide of Greater Montreal, OpenNorth, and the Government of Québec.

In this context, COCo continued to share its human-centered posture regarding technological support. We emphasized the need to prioritize the holistic approaches, capacity building, strategic thinking, and “real talks” required to match tech processes with resources for community groups over easy, turnkey solutions.

In addition to these activities, the tech team continued to work on reinforcing its operations. We collaborated closely with members of the team to align our service delivery processes and work conditions with good practices in organizational development. In particular, the Tech and Organizational Development teams collaborated to converge their processes.

As we continue to rebuild our capacity following the impacts of the pandemic, and to move towards more spaciousness in our work, we are gradually freeing up more time to focus on our core work, offering technological and organizational support to grassroots and community groups.
Information Sessions

COCo provides free information sessions on a variety of topics related to non-profit work to support community organizations and the people who shape them. This year, we provided sessions to a wide variety of participants ranging from established organizations to individuals taking their first steps to set up an organization. The 3 most popular topics were, in order:

— Board, Governance, AGMs, Bylaws
— Incorporation and Charitable Status
— Funding development

In 2022, COCo offered 98 information sessions to 97 organizations, for a total of 71 hours and 134 participants.

These numbers represent an increase in the number of organizations and individuals reached compared with 2021. Furthermore, the percentage of information sessions that lasted 30 minutes or more went up by 24%, indicating that the groups who did seek help got a more in-depth conversation than in previous years.

In some cases, groups who had wanted to contract with COCo ended up receiving an information session, or vice-versa. As COCo adapts to the demand for more in-depth work with organizations, we are developing ways of tracking these other forms of information sessions, in order to better measure impact, as well as streamlining the process for requests.
In recent years, COCo’s team engaged in deep reflections about its role in fostering organizational development and anti-oppression practices in the community sector. Following several years of increasing demand for our services, we focused on building our capacity to meaningfully and sustainably engage in this work, both with groups and within our organization.

To accompany community groups through organizational development and anti-oppression processes, COCo works with a team of facilitators composed of staff members and affiliates. At the start of 2022, our facilitation team was greatly understaffed, affecting our ability to respond to requests for organizational and anti-oppression support. This was due in part to increased burnout rates and career shifts brought on by the pandemic. Other factors also contributed to turnover and understaffing at COCo:

- Some members of our facilitation team moved on to building their own consulting practices.
- While social movements led to an increased demand for anti-oppression services in 2020-22, the sector’s capacity to meet this need was unsupported by decades of underfunding, low wages, and systemic inequities in this work.
- Increased risks of trauma and burnout associated with anti-oppression work, particularly for multiply marginalized Indigenous, Black, and racialized facilitators, lead to high turnover rates in this work.
With these realities in mind, COCo conducted an extensive recruitment of affiliate facilitators in the spring of 2022. Here are some of the steps we took through this process:

— Increasing the rates we pay affiliates
— Increasing the resources allocated to this work, leading to paid training and coaching opportunities
— Developing a human-centered, generative recruitment process anchored in anti-oppressive values resulting in welcoming 10 new facilitators
— Favouring consultations by teams of two facilitators rather than individuals to create more space for peer support, relationship-building, and the cross-pollination of skills
— Reinforcing program administration mechanisms and procedures to better track our work with community groups

Taking the time to invest in these steps allowed us to improve working conditions for COCo facilitators, rebuild our team, and reboot our services during the second half of the year. In the coming years, we look forward to digging deeper to build more capacity and contribute to improving conditions for anti-oppression facilitators at COCo and in community groups.

As we reflect on the past year, we are grateful to our team of facilitators and thank them for the tremendous efforts and vulnerability required to carry out the important work of transformational change.
The Diversité en œuvre project aims to contribute to the reduction of barriers to employment experienced by Black, Indigenous, and people of color in the Québec community sector. Through this project, we are focusing on developing tools, offering training and peer support to changemakers working in anti-oppression, and accompanying groups by and for Indigenous, Black, and racialized persons to address barriers to employment, access to leadership roles, and workplace training.

In 2022, the Diversité en œuvre project allowed us to offer:

— 143 hours of subsidized organizational accompaniment to 6 priority groups in our theory of change
— 14 peer-led co-development sessions for changemakers
— the space to explore a number of topics, including how to set up an intake assessment with a group, strategic planning from an anti-oppressive perspective, and managing egos and interruptions in group settings
— 17 coaching sessions offered to changemakers supporting groups in anti-oppression processes
— 2 two-day workshops allowing 26 changemakers to gain skills in the Deep Democracy method

Diversité en œuvre also allows us to reflect on mechanisms to provide safer workplaces for changemakers who do this important work. This project has been made possible in part by the Government of Canada.
Ateliers/C is an annual series of workshops for community organizations in the Greater Montreal area, coordinated by COCo in partnership with Centraide of Greater Montreal. During the workshops, participants explore different themes related to organizational development. The workshops allow participants to meet and discover new practices and approaches through the expertise of guest collaborators and their peers. Over the past 5 seasons, ateliers/C has reached more than 1300 participations and over 600 organizations.

Highlights:

1. In 2022, a special effort was made to deepen the alignment of ateliers/C with COCo’s anti-oppressive values and theory of change. This is reflected in the choice of topics and facilitators.

2. In September 2022, 40 people attended a one-day workshop “Deconstructing (De)Colonization in our Work and Minds”, facilitated by Larissa Crawford, co-founder of Future Ancestors, a pan-Canadian Indigenous and Black social enterprise known for its commitments to climate justice and the removal of systemic barriers through anti-racism and ancestral responsibility.

3. Implementation of an ateliers/C Consultation Committee: This committee, made up of COCo team members, is a supportive space allowing us to consult each other, reflect, and review programming as we develop the ateliers/C series.
2022 in numbers:

8 virtual workshops, 5 in French, 1 in English and 2 bilingual

250 participants took part in ateliers/C, 6% more than in 2021

143 organizations participated in ateliers/C, including 29 from the COCo network
Our Partners

Consultations

In 2022, exchanges with community groups, working groups, coalitions, and partners allowed COCo to stay current on emerging trends and needs in the community sector, and adjust its actions accordingly.

In the past, we focused our consultation energies on formal memberships with coalitions. In recent years, we broadened our definition to include other formal and informal spaces where we can have the most useful impact. Here are some examples of consultation spaces COCo engaged with in 2022:

— Comité sectoriel de main d’œuvre en économie sociale et action communautaire (CSMO-ÉSAC)
— Table régionale des organismes volontaires d’éducation populaire de Montréal (TROVEP)
— Initiative sur l’éthique numérique, CDÉACF
— DATAide, in partnership with Centraide and OpenNorth
— Conversations with community groups who seek our services
— Conversations with our project and funding partners

Funding Partners

We would like to extend our deep gratitude to our partners for their ongoing trust and support for our actions in 2022:

— Centraide of Greater Montreal
— Government of Canada. Canadian Heritage
— Gouvernement du Québec, ministère de l’Éducation (ME)
— Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation
— Trottier Family Foundation
The year 2022 was marked by increases to our core revenue from Quebec’s ministère de l’Éducation as well as our project funding (Government of Canada, Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation, and Trottier Family Foundation). Our autonomous revenue decreased due in great part to understaffing and lower contract numbers at the beginning of the year. We finished the year with a $79,669 surplus, which has been allocated to restricted and unrestricted funds.
### Income statement

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<th>Revenue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gouvernement du Québec, ministère de l’Éducation</td>
<td>$243,168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centraide of Greater Montreal</td>
<td>$210,746</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucie and André Chagnon Foundation</td>
<td>$132,986</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government of Canada. Canadian Heritage</td>
<td>$110,812</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomous income (training contracts, coaching, facilitation and mediation)</td>
<td>$84,716</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trottier Family Foundation</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government of Canada. Emergency Wage Subsidy</td>
<td>$0,000</td>
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<td>Other</td>
<td>$3,379</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$825,807</strong></td>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries and social security charges</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional fees</td>
<td>$75,885</td>
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<td>Rent</td>
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<td>Professional development</td>
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<td>Website – development and maintenance</td>
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<td>Travel and meals</td>
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<td>Translation</td>
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<td>Amortization – equipment and materials</td>
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<td>Telecommunications</td>
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<td>Office supplies and equipment</td>
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<td>Room and equipment rental</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$2,263</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$746,138</strong></td>
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**Change in net income**  
$79,669