The Changing Face of Women Entrepreneurs

Good news:
Women entrepreneurs have quadrupled over the past 40 years

Between 1976 and 2018, the number of women entrepreneurs grew from 49,000 to 241,000. Today, about 28% of all entrepreneurs are women.

Number of women entrepreneurs in Canada, 1976 to 2018

3.1x Female entrepreneurs grew 3.1 times faster than male entrepreneurs over the last 40 years

2.5x Women entrepreneurs grew 2.5 times faster than women in the labour force over the same period

Good for business
If women and men participated equally as entrepreneurs the GDP could rise by $5 trillion globally and $80 billion in Canada.

Motivated by much more than money

→ 64% want to be their own boss (independence, autonomy, flexibility)
→ 59% for pursuit of passion and self-fulfillment
→ 30% want make a positive contribution to society
Women face different challenges than men

Financial
Access to less financing and capital

Network
Less people doing similar jobs or starting similar businesses

Mentor
Fewer role models to look up to

Unconscious bias
Most people are gender-biased, whether they are unaware of it or not

Stress
Women entrepreneurs consistently report higher rates of stress than men

Helping unlock women’s potential

BDC has made it a priority to support the growth and success of women entrepreneurs (WEs) at every step of their business.

► In 2018, we doubled our lending target for majority women-owned businesses to $1.4 billion by 2021

► We will provide $200 million in capital to women-led technology companies through the Women in Technology Venture Fund

► In 2018, we signed the UN’s Women Empowerment Principles

► Every year, we host dozens of events and roundtables for growth-oriented women entrepreneurs to network and learn-from other like-minded women

► We offer a supplier diversity program for clients and certified diverse or B Corp companies

► We provide a variety of free, online learning tools to help entrepreneurs succeed

Call us at 1-888-INFO-BDC or go to bdc.ca/woman