



# WEGrow

Unlocking the Growth Potential of Women  
Entrepreneurs in Latin America  
and the Caribbean



Building a better  
working world



Multilateral Investment Fund  
Member of the IDB Group

## About the MIF

The Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) works to support economic growth and poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean through the promotion of investment and private sector development. As part of its program, the MIF seeks to support entrepreneurs and small and medium enterprises by creating a favorable ecosystem for early stage financing through angel investing, seed capital, and entrepreneurship. For more information, please visit: [www.fomin.org](http://www.fomin.org).

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# GLOSSARY

**Entrepreneurial activity:** For the purpose of this report, entrepreneurial activity describes the reason why the entrepreneur developed her/his venture, the ambition with which s/he started her/his business, if s/he has ever considered closing it, the sector or industry in which the business operates, the scope of products and/or services offered, its corporate structure and the existence of a mentor to guide the entrepreneur along her/his journey.

**Ambition:** Ambition refers to the characteristics that differentiate successful women entrepreneurs from less successful ones, what is needed to transform a vision into a real business.

**Profile:** For the purpose of this report, an entrepreneur's profile (for men and women) represents the characteristics that describe her or him. These include age, marital status, number of children (if any), highest degree of studies, whether they belong to an entrepreneurial family, and their current socio-economic level.

**Smart capital:** Financial support provided by investors, who in addition to financing a business, help in developing the business by sharing their knowledge, experience, network, and management skills.

**Angel investor:** Private investor, individual or entity that provides smart capital to a new high-potential business to foster its growth.

**Seed capital:** Funding used for the initial investment in a venture to develop

prototypes, market research, or initial production; provided with a long time horizon and for the purpose of generating profits, analyzing the development of new technologies, or for different personal incentives (giving back to society, starting another business, self-development, etc.). Seed capital has a high-risk/high-return profile, higher than that of venture capital.

**Venture capital:** Financial support provided after seed capital for the first business expansion to meet needs related to working capital, inventory, etc. It is provided with a 4-5 year time horizon in order to maximize financial returns.

**High-growth women entrepreneurs:** Women entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had at least 20% annual growth in sales and/or employment for the past three years.

**High-growth men entrepreneurs:** Men entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had at least 20% annual growth in sales and/or employment for the past three years.

**Low-growth women entrepreneurs:** Women entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had between 10% and 19% annual growth in sales and/or employment for the past three years.

**Cultural values:** They refer to the beliefs, customs and activities that members in society have in common.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High-growth entrepreneurship has been demonstrated to be a catalyst for high socio-economic impact influence. Although just 5% to 7% of all American businesses are high-impact, these businesses create most of the new jobs in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, according to a 2012 Endeavor report,<sup>2</sup> high-growth entrepreneurial companies annually generate 30 more jobs than the average comparable company.

High-growth entrepreneurs create jobs, inspire existing and would-be entrepreneurs to invest in their communities, and contribute to their entrepreneurial ecosystems to generate new businesses. Though each entrepreneur and each company are different, all share one thing in common: their exceptional leadership, which allows them to realize their vision and transmit their passion to their teams, investors, and communities.<sup>3</sup>

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, little is known about high-growth entrepreneurs and even less is known about women whose companies achieve high growth: Who are they? How did they succeed in reaching this level of growth? What motivates them? What are their biggest challenges and ambitions? What do they need to keep their businesses growing? This

report aims to collect information to get to know them better and to explore common aspects of women whose businesses have experienced high levels of growth (referred to as high-growth women entrepreneurs onwards in this report).

Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- Identify them: Their profiles, needs, challenges, and key factors that contribute to the success of high-growth women entrepreneurs in the region.
- Analyze them: Compare and analyze high-growth women entrepreneurs in the region with their male counterparts and with women entrepreneurs whose companies have lower rates of growth.<sup>4</sup>
- Encourage their participation: Propose areas of intervention to promote high-growth entrepreneurship among women in the region.

The findings presented below are the result of a study of entrepreneurs in nine regional countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay). In general, high-growth women entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean:

- Are opportunity-driven and not necessity-driven.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Vital Entrepreneur: High Impact at Its Best.* (2013). EY, Kauffman Foundation.

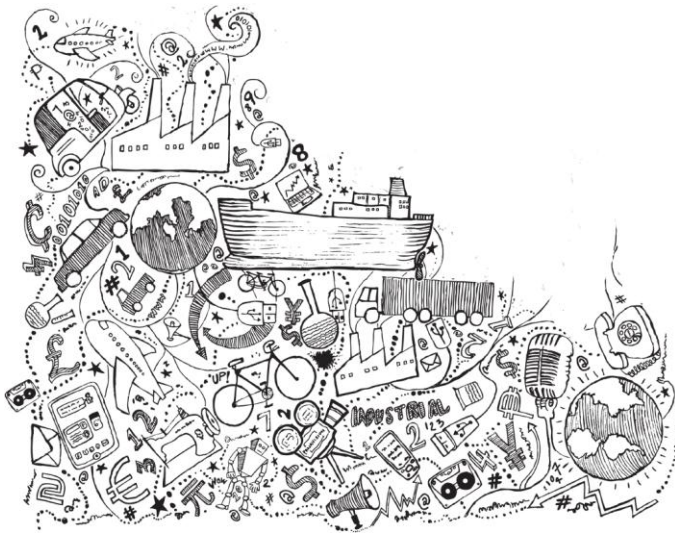
<sup>2</sup> *How High Is High Impact?* (2012). Endeavor Global.

<sup>3</sup> *The Vital Entrepreneur: High Impact at Its Best.* (2013). EY, Kauffman Foundation.

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<sup>4</sup> *Entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had between 10% and 19% annual growth in sales or employment for the past three years.*

- Are between 30 and 39 years old, live with a partner, and have on average two children.
  - Come from families with an entrepreneurial background.
  - Currently belong to a high or medium-high socio-economic level.
  - Have a college degree (bachelor's degree or equivalent).
  - Rely on their "business sense" and on their technical expertise to start a business.
  - Generally start their businesses in traditional or mature sectors.
  - Started with the idea of growing their businesses into medium or large enterprises within their own countries.
  - Are majority owners of their businesses and/or raised funding from their relatives or friends.
  - Rely on their inner circles (partners, family, and friends) to reconcile the multiple roles that society expects from them.
  - Want to continue growing their businesses and would be willing to do anything to bring their businesses to the next level.
  - Have to deal with certain challenges in order to grow their businesses, such as lack of funding, fear of failure, and conflicts between the multiple roles that they play.
- Seizing and capitalizing on the ambitions of women entrepreneurs must be a priority for the public and private sectors due to the impact they generate in their economies and communities. In addition, the entrepreneurial ecosystem must be strengthened by promoting better networks, exploring a greater diversity of funding sources, and promoting government policies that support women entrepreneurs with balancing their work and personal lives.



# WHY SHOULD WE ANALYZE HIGH-GROWTH WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN?

- Because they could have the same impact as high-growth women entrepreneurs do in other developed economies.
- Because there is a common belief that they face much more complex challenges than women in more developed economies.
- Because there is no reliable historical information related to their profiles and their businesses.



In Latin America and the Caribbean, women represent 41.6%<sup>5</sup> of the economically active population. The average rate of entrepreneurial activity of women in the region is 15%,<sup>6</sup> with 71% starting their businesses based on opportunity and 29% of necessity.<sup>7</sup>

Opportunity-driven women entrepreneurs are usually long-term entrepreneurs and have a greater impact on the economy than low-growth entrepreneurs, mainly by creating wealth and jobs, and by boosting innovation when compared to low-growth women entrepreneurs.

“In Latin America and the Caribbean, women face much more complex challenges in the formal economy than women in more developed countries, such as: a lack of policies and programs to support and encourage entrepreneurial activity, excessive norms and regulations, and restricted access to credit.”<sup>8</sup> Likewise, there are differences in the entrepreneurship environment for women across different countries in the region.<sup>9</sup>

Women entrepreneurs face different challenges in building high-growth ventures; they not only have to deal with challenges to start their companies, but also **have to face**

**specific gender barriers in subsequent phases when developing their businesses.**<sup>10</sup>

Despite the efforts of the public and private sectors to improve the entrepreneurial environment, **there is still a significant gender gap in entrepreneurship** (primarily in terms of quantity and growth), **which puts the female population at a disadvantage.**<sup>11</sup> This is not only the result of a complex entrepreneurial environment commonly faced by women in the region, but also the result of their own attitudes and motivations.

The most significant challenges that women entrepreneurs face in growing their businesses include: (i) their companies typically begin with less capital than their male counterparts, which translates into low performance in terms of assets, revenues, profitability and survival;<sup>12</sup> (ii) women seem to be hesitant to borrow money, as they usually believe that their requests will be rejected and that the amount of loans available to them will not be sufficient to help them grow their businesses;<sup>13</sup> (iii) women have greater difficulty developing networks of contacts for their businesses;<sup>14</sup> (iv) women are affected to a greater extent by the demands of work and personal life;<sup>15</sup> (v) women show greater fear of failure and less

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<sup>5</sup> “Female labor force in Latin America and the Caribbean.” (2012). World Bank Database. The labor force is defined as the economically active population, all the people who bring their work to produce goods and services during a given period.

<sup>6</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2013). 2012 Global Report.

<sup>7</sup> Entrepreneurs motivated by need are those that venture because they are unemployed and need a source of income. Entrepreneurs motivated by opportunities are those who venture to exploit a market opportunity, increase their income, or seek economic independence.

<sup>8</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2013). 2012 Global Report.

<sup>9</sup> Women’s Entrepreneurial Venture Scope. (2013). EIU.

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<sup>10</sup> The Vital Entrepreneur: High Impact at Its Best. (2013). EY, Kauffman Foundation.

<sup>11</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2013). 2012 Global Report.

<sup>12</sup> Scaling Up: Why Women-Owned Businesses Can Recharge the Global Economy. (2009). EY.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. This refers to the relationships that help professionals show their abilities and meet prospects that, ultimately, will purchase services from them and/or will recommend them to potential buyers.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.



confidence in themselves;<sup>16</sup> (vi) women are more likely to operate their projects without employees; (vii) women are customer-centric and rarely sell outside of their countries;<sup>17</sup> and (viii) women often do not avail themselves of specialized assistance to grow their enterprises.<sup>18</sup>

In order for women to be able to achieve high-growth entrepreneurship, they need tools and programs tailored to their needs and to the roles that they normally play in family life. In addition, they need to have follow up and support during subsequent phases to sustain growth of their businesses.<sup>19</sup>

In Latin America and the Caribbean, women's self-confidence is lower than that of men: 56% of women considered themselves capable of starting their own businesses (compared to 68% of men who do).<sup>20</sup> At the same time, in the region, women are more dependent on their husbands, partners and relatives to start and grow their businesses.<sup>21</sup>

Although there are many factors that, to a large extent, determine the decision to start a business; such as age, employment status, education, income level, contact networks

and perceptions of the environment,<sup>22</sup> the main differentiator for both men and women high-growth entrepreneurs is their ability to develop companies and businesses with great impact in terms of long-term value creation (including wealth and jobs), and to become role models in the world of entrepreneurship. Through their leadership, motivation and knowledge, both high-growth men and women entrepreneurs succeed, even in adverse economic times.

Many high-growth women entrepreneurs have overcome or simply ignored traditional barriers and have made progress toward strong, sustained growth with their endeavors.

Detailed historical information about high-growth women entrepreneurs in the Latin American and Caribbean region does not yet exist, affecting the visibility of the women's overall entrepreneurial activity in the region. In addition, since it is a recent topic, the number of success stories is not very high in comparison to the many examples of successful high-growth men entrepreneurs. There are different initiatives driven by women's organizations and networks that can contribute to the empowerment and autonomy of women, but these have not been registered in statistical records and have not been successfully systematized in order to assess their impacts.<sup>23</sup>

According to estimates from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), in Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of new companies established in 2012 was 7%

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<sup>16</sup> *Scaling Up: Why Women-Owned Businesses Can Recharge the Global Economy*. (2009). EY.

<sup>17</sup> *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*. (2013). 2012 Women's Report.

<sup>18</sup> *Scaling Up: Why Women-Owned Businesses Can Recharge the Global Economy*. (2009). EY.

<sup>19</sup> "Le développement de l'entrepreneuriat féminin." (2013). ILO. As example of the support programs tailored to the needs of women is the one carried out jointly by the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the WED (Women Entrepreneurship Development), in five countries in Africa and Asia. Its objective is to increase women-owned companies' income by 50% and increase sales four times.

<sup>20</sup> *Scaling Up: Why Women-Owned Businesses Can Recharge the Global Economy*. (2009). EY.

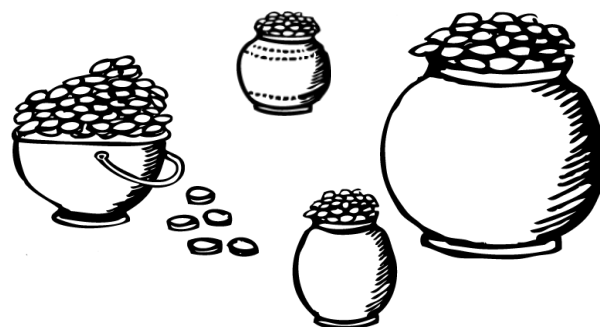
<sup>21</sup> *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor*. (2013). 2012 The Women's Report.

<sup>22</sup> *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor* (2011). 2010 The Women's Report.

<sup>23</sup> *Women entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean: Realities, Challenges and Obstacles*. (2010). ECLAC.

higher than the previous year,<sup>24</sup> which leaves a gap for entrepreneurial activities to continue developing. However, what is not so obvious is the need to promote entrepreneurship through increased education, opportunity and support to potential entrepreneurs.

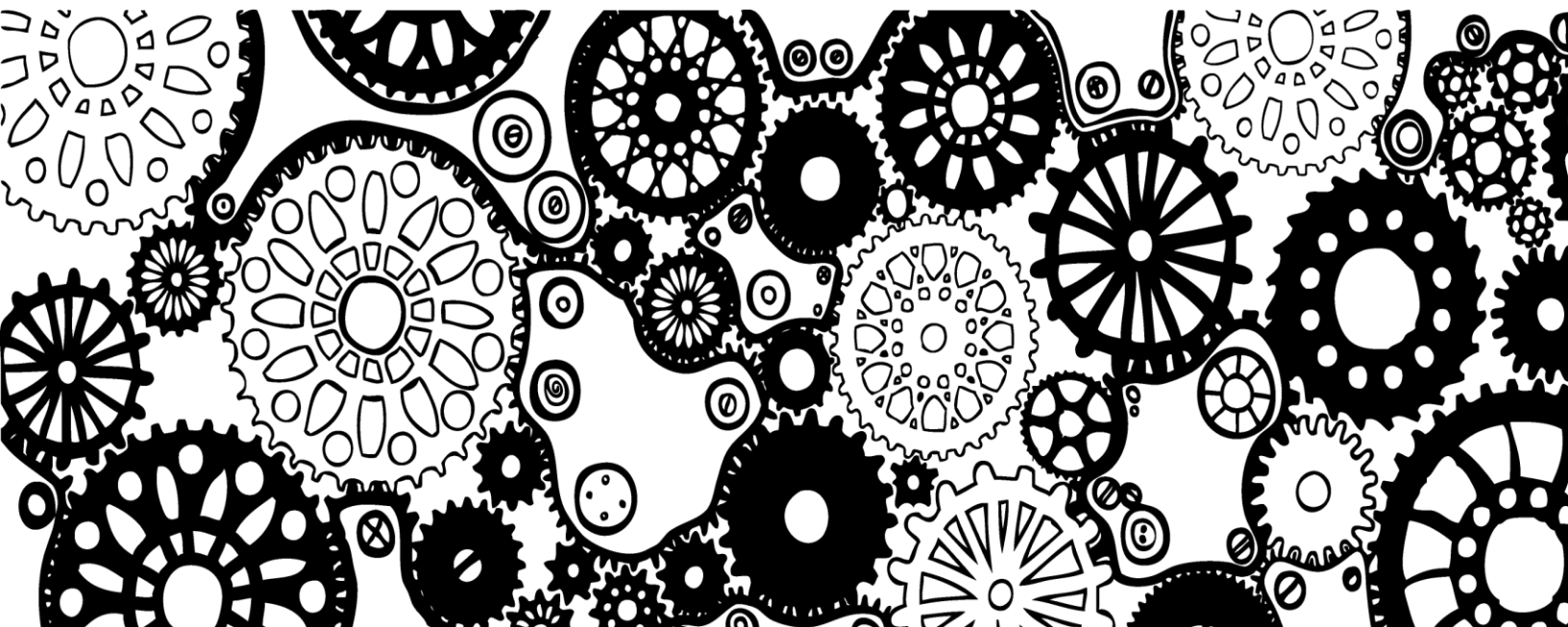
In recent years, there has been a positive change in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region, evidenced by a greater number of agencies, support networks and funding sources that focus on providing specific services to all entrepreneurs. According to a study by EY titled, “Women: The Next Emerging Market,” by eliminating the barriers related to gender issues that currently impede the progress of entrepreneurs, companies would benefit from underutilized talent. Women entrepreneurs not only have creative ideas and ambitions, but also have the capacity to bring new concepts and products to the market.



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<sup>24</sup> *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. (2014). 2013 Global Report.*

# WHAT METHODOLOGY WAS USED TO DEVELOP THIS STUDY?



This study is based on quantitative and qualitative data collected by online surveys, face-to-face interviews, and focus groups conducted across nine countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay). Information on the perception of high-growth women entrepreneurs was collected from different players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem (incubators, accelerators, associations of entrepreneurs, and academic professionals). Additionally, surveys were conducted with 427 entrepreneurs (306 women and 121 men) and 16 women executives. Eight focus groups were conducted with different players from the entrepreneurial ecosystem in all countries analyzed except Uruguay. These groups were comprised of high-growth and low-growth entrepreneurs of both sexes; and in some cases women executives and relevant players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem from the public and private sectors.

The sample was divided into three groups:

High-growth women entrepreneurs: Women entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had at least 20% annual growth in sales or employment for the past three years.

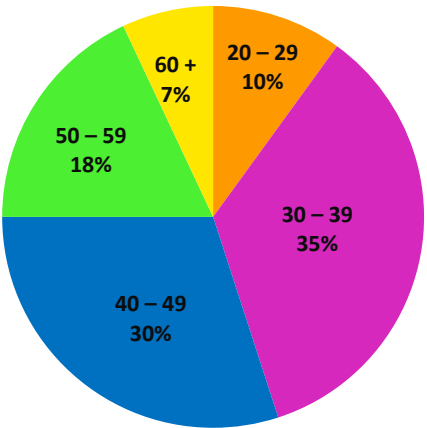
High-growth men entrepreneurs: Men entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had at least 20% annual growth in sales or employment for the past three years.

Low-growth women entrepreneurs: Women entrepreneurs whose companies are formal and have had between 10% and 19% annual growth in sales or employment for the past three years.

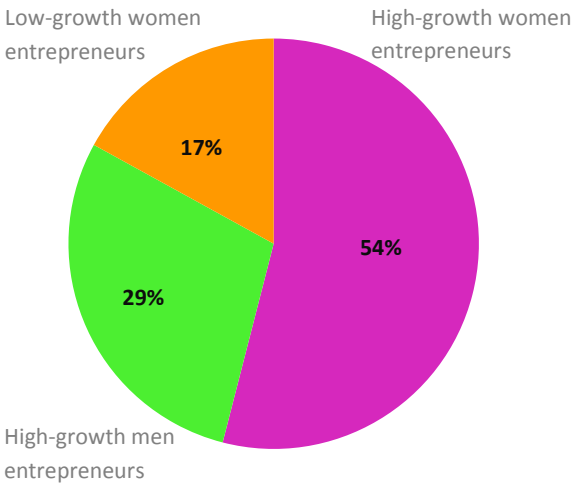
The statistics illustrated in all charts and tables in this study derive from the surveys and interviews conducted by the EY team, unless otherwise noted.

**Entrepreneurs surveyed, by age**  
(% of total responses)

*What is your age?*



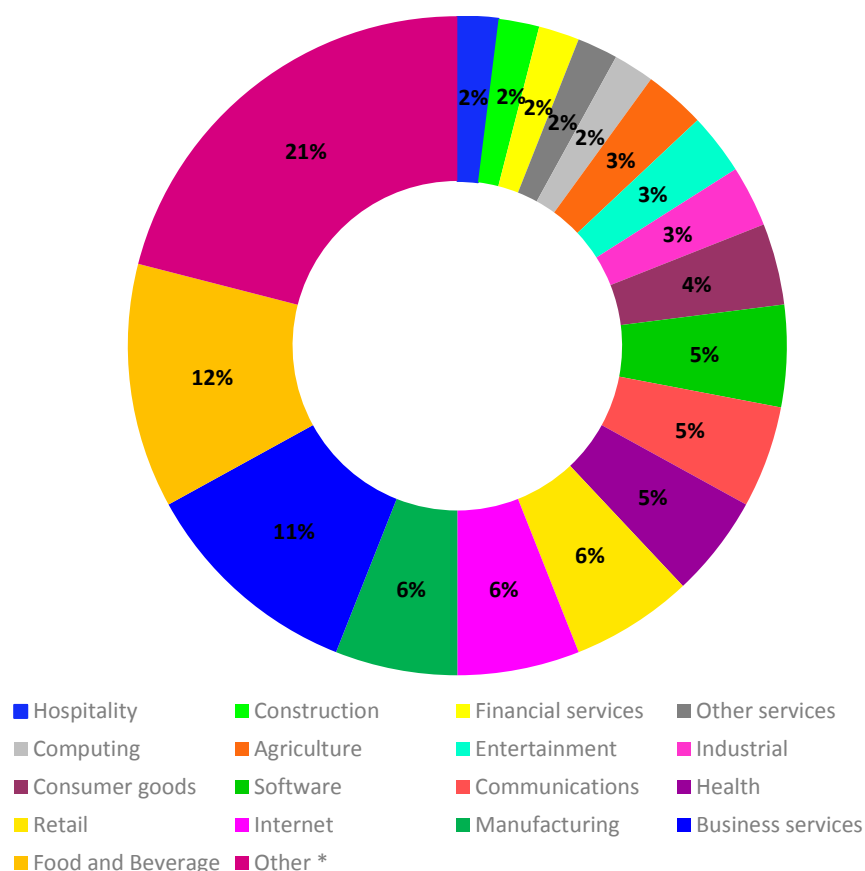
**Entrepreneurs interviewed, by sex**  
(% of total responses)





**Entrepreneurs surveyed, by industry**  
(% of total responses)

*To which sector or industry does your business belong?*



*\* Other includes sectors such as biotechnology, real estate, transportation, recycling, education materials, energy, and public services.*

**TOPICS DISCUSSED DURING THE INTERVIEWS**

Interviews with entrepreneurs:

- Demographics: Age, marital status, highest degree of studies, membership in an entrepreneurial family, and corporate background.
- Year in which their business was established.
- Business description: Income/employees—initially and currently, funding at the beginning of their project, support received, and opportunity cost of being an entrepreneur.
- When starting the business: Major motivators and challenges.
- Currently: Vision, objectives and challenges.
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystem: Rating the entrepreneurial ecosystem in their country, participation of the government and the private sector, role of incubators and accelerators, regulations that

promote an entrepreneurial environment (social security, taxes, procedures, permits, licenses and patents), chambers of commerce and agencies, universities that promote entrepreneurship, capital market development.

- Advice for any player of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Differences between men and women entrepreneurs.
- Definition of ambition and success for men and women entrepreneurs.
- Role of women in their country.
- Characteristics of a successful entrepreneur.

Interview with key players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem:

- Rating of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Key players: Involvement of the government, private sector, the role of incubators and accelerators, regulations that promote an entrepreneurial environment (social security, taxes, procedures, permits, licenses and

patents), chambers of commerce and agencies, universities that promote entrepreneurship.

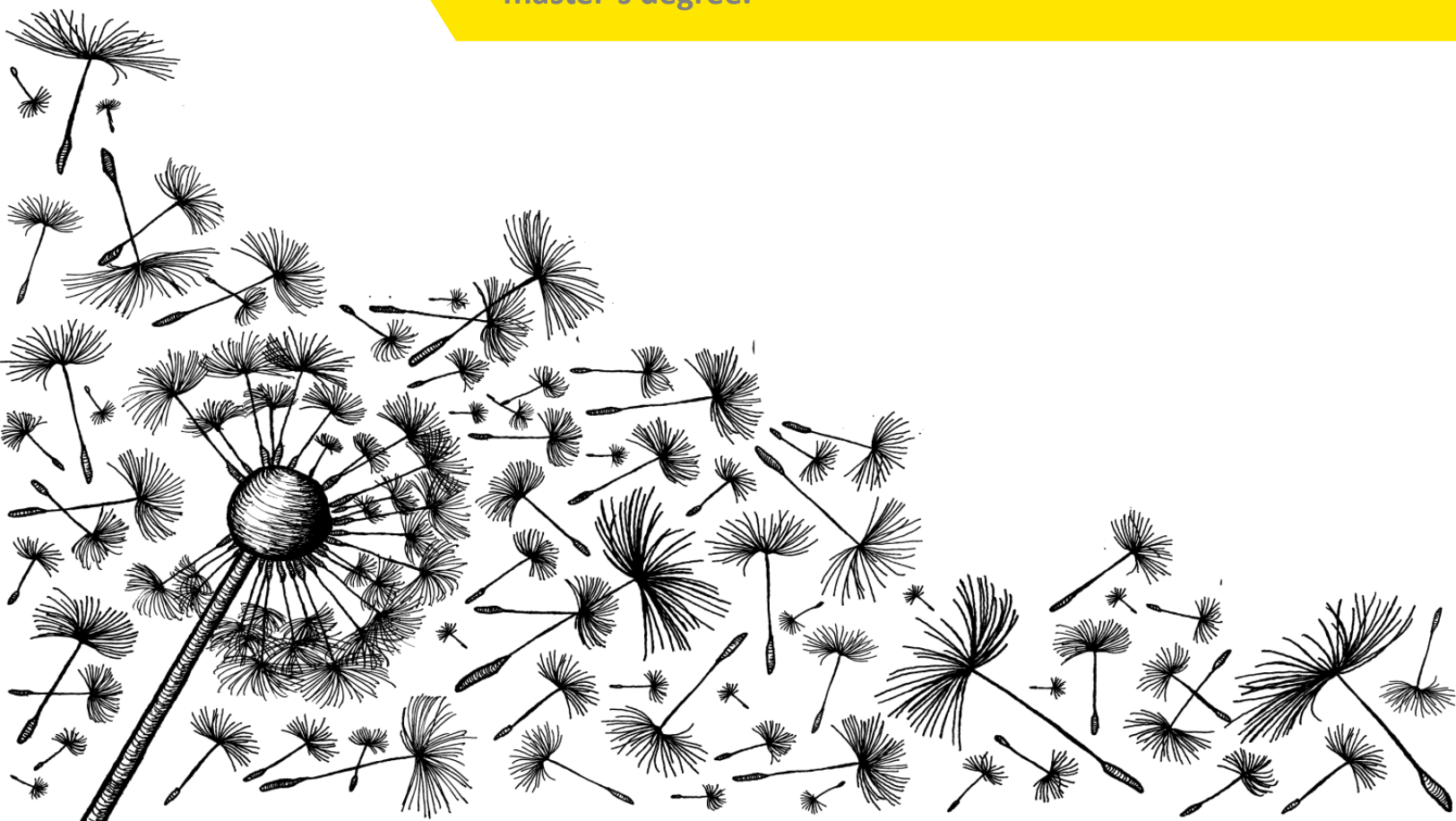
- Capital market development.
- Promotion of and information on entrepreneurial companies.
- What should be done in order to increase the prevalence of high-growth women entrepreneurs?
- What should be done to increase the success of entrepreneurs?
- What are the main motivators of an entrepreneur when starting a project?
- What are the main challenges that an entrepreneur must face in order to grow?
- What are the differences between men and women entrepreneurs regarding opportunities, leadership and management?
- What is the role that women play in each of the countries?
- Advice for any entity of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, with the purpose of accelerating the growth of entrepreneurs.

**The study was divided into the following phases:**



# WHO ARE THE REGION'S HIGH-GROWTH WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS?

- Women between 30 and 39 years of age who live with their partners and have on average two children.
- They come from families with a history of entrepreneurship.
- They belong to high or medium-high socio-economic levels and hold a bachelor's or master's degree.



## 1. GROWING UP IN AN ENTREPRENEURIAL FAMILY INSPIRES AND SHAPES THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

Growing up in an entrepreneurial family is a factor that shapes the spirit and the desire to start up a business. Living in an environment where one observes activities first hand and listens to entrepreneurial parents' conversations plants a seed that could eventually lead to establishing a venture. This is known as the "Kitchen Table Effect," where children from entrepreneurial families live and learn from the family's experiences and consequences of starting a business. Three out of four high-growth entrepreneurs in our surveys, both men and women, come from entrepreneurial families.

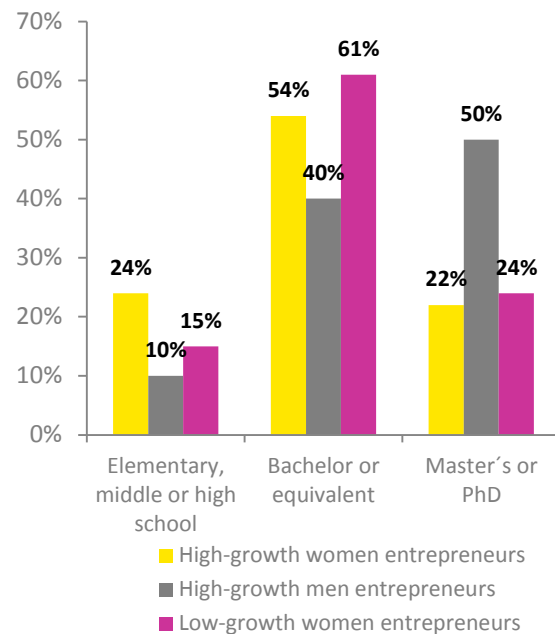
Both women and men who come from entrepreneurial families have often been inspired to start their own businesses. However, when they leave their families and are exposed to other people, men entrepreneurs tend to look for mentors outside their families to help them start and grow their businesses, whereas **women entrepreneurs tend to look for mentoring within their own families**. In many cases, their mentors do not have up-to-date business experience or the knowledge needed to maximize the business's potential.

## 2. HIGHER EDUCATION IS KEY, AND INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Being exposed to an academic environment and international experiences can make a difference in how fast a business can grow; these experiences improve an entrepreneur's ability to network and also positively shape his or her ambition to grow.

Data show that men entrepreneurs have not only achieved higher educational levels, but also have had the opportunity to study abroad in higher percentages.

Level of education  
(% of total responses)  
*What is your highest level of education?*



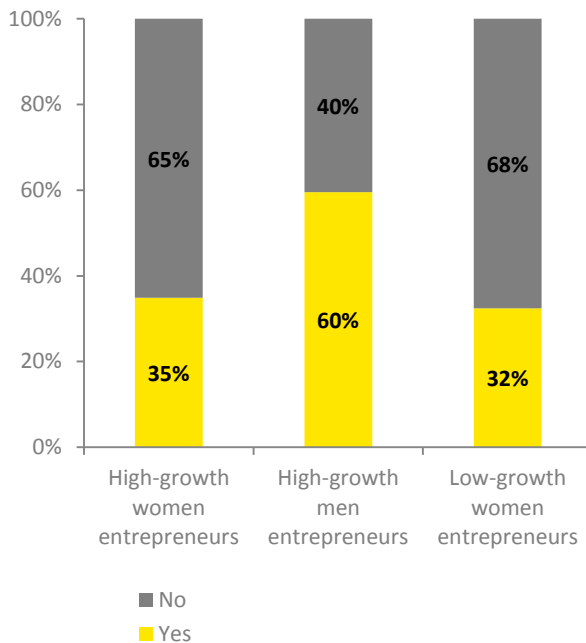
Although the majority of men and women entrepreneurs hold a bachelor's degree, there is a significant difference in the level of studies completed by each group. Half of the high-growth men entrepreneurs surveyed have a graduate degree (Master's or PhD), compared with only 22% of high-growth women entrepreneurs and 24% of low-growth women entrepreneurs.

Approximately a third of women entrepreneurs (high and low-growth) have had the opportunity to study abroad, compared to 60% of men who have experienced education outside their country.



### International educational experience (% of total responses)

*Have you had the opportunity to study abroad?*



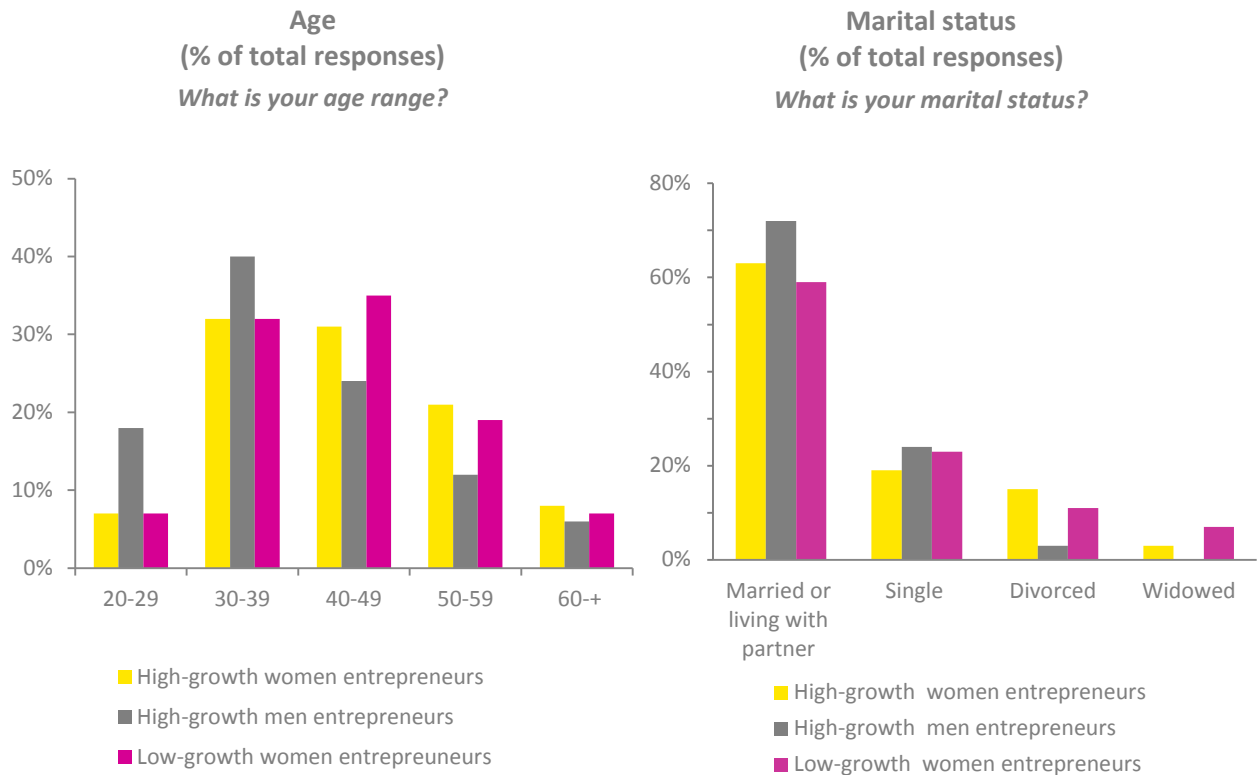
Exposure to international experiences benefits and shapes an entrepreneur's profile, as s/he benefits from a broader business perspective, learns new ways to face challenges, gains cultural awareness and improves the ability to identify new business opportunities. Thus, encouraging women to get international experiences is key to their success.

### 3. AGE AND MARITAL STATUS DO NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE, BUT WOMEN TEND TO LAUNCH VENTURES LATER IN THEIR CAREERS

Most high-growth women entrepreneurs are young adults (70% are between 20 and 49 years old), are highly educated (at least 76% hold a bachelor's degree), and have the support of their families and spouses (63% are either married or live with their partner) in the different stages of their venture.

As with the majority of high-growth women entrepreneurs, most high-growth men entrepreneurs (82%) are younger than 50 years old. However, data suggests that **men tend to launch their ventures at a younger age**, as 18% of them are between 20 and 29 years old, compared to only 7% of women entrepreneurs (both high and low-growth).

Regardless of their sex, most entrepreneurs are either married or live with a partner.



## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
Have studied abroad	35%	60%	32%
Are between 20 and 29 years old	7%	18%	7%
Have parents with a bachelor's degree	48%	70%	51%
Prevailing MIH <sup>25</sup>	High and medium-high 72%	High and medium-high 96%	High and medium-high 73%

Note: Fields shaded in yellow denote significant differences with the other groups studied.

<sup>25</sup> MIH: the monthly income level per household is derived from the income ranges as they are defined by each country's national statistics office.

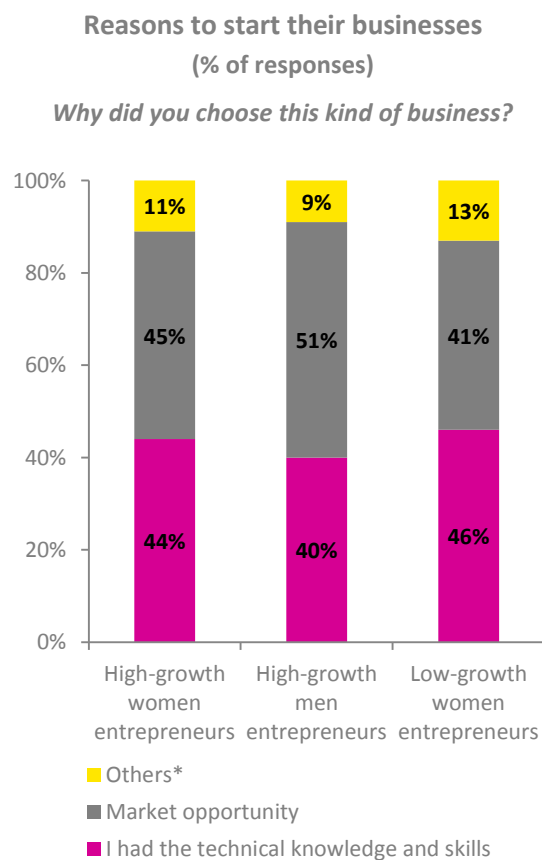
## WHAT DEFINES THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES?

- They trust their “business sense” and their technical knowledge to start their businesses. They do so in traditional or mature sectors and their initial goal is to have a medium or large domestic company.
- They are majority owners of their businesses and primarily partner and source funding from family and friends.
- Their current business is their first business and they have not thought of closing or selling it when faced with economic problems or conflict managing their time.



## 1. THEY LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES IN FAMILIAR SECTORS

Most high-growth women entrepreneurs, like their male counterparts, ventured driven by opportunity, as they either identified or created a need for their products in the market. This opportunity is further reinforced by the fact that the majority of entrepreneurs have the technical knowledge required in their sector.

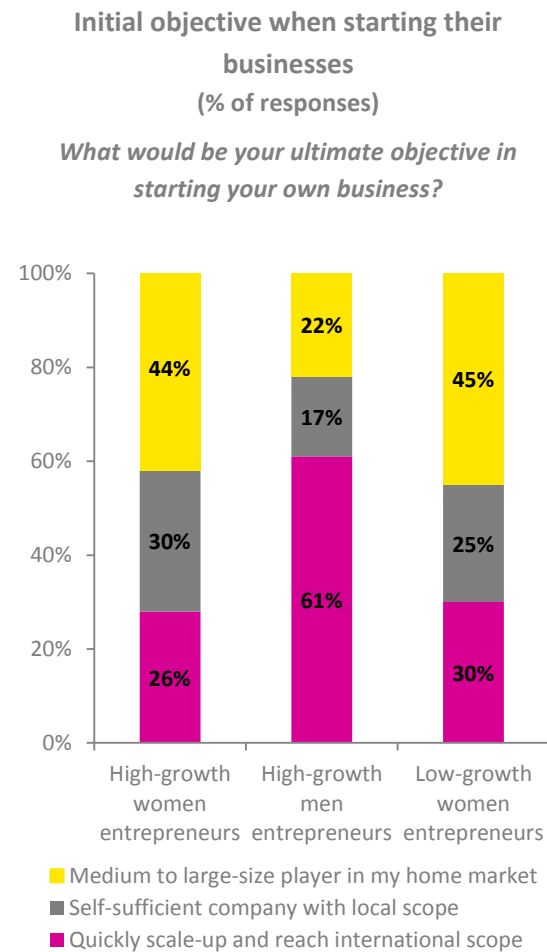


\* Others include reasons to venture, such as exploring a new sector, had contacts from the sector that inspired or supported me, or the company was passed on to me.

## 2. THEIR AMBITION CHANGES OVER TIME

Unlike men entrepreneurs, high and low-growth women entrepreneurs began their projects with the ambition to grow them only to the national level; that is, they did not have the aspiration to create businesses with regional or international reach.

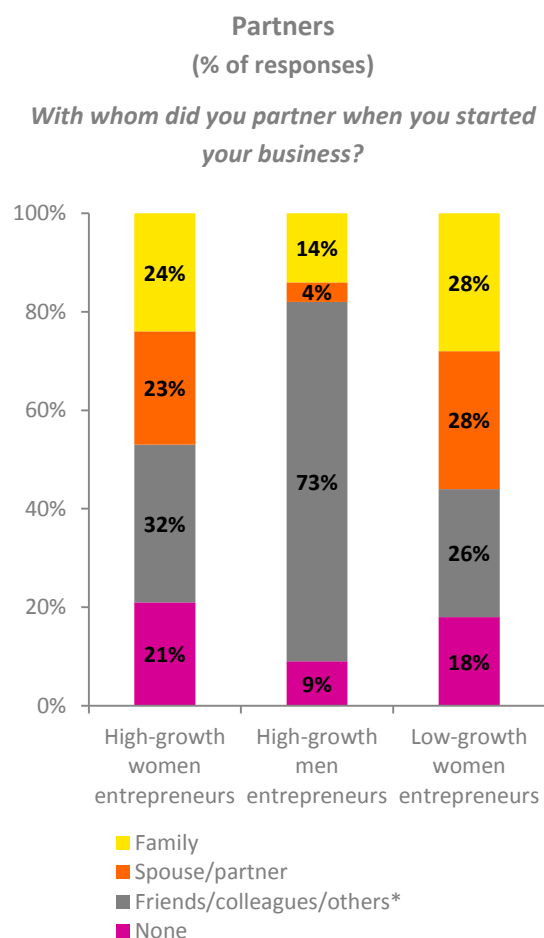
However, over time, and as their businesses expand, the national market begins to look small to them. It is at this point where thinking bold and outside their countries becomes their next challenge, therefore, their ambition changes.





### 3. THEY VENTURE ALONE OR PARTNER WITH RELATIVES

Most women entrepreneurs own or are majority shareholders of their businesses. However, those who decide to partner prefer to choose family and friends. About 50% of female entrepreneurs (high and low-growth) have partnered with family or their significant others, while 60% of men have partnered with friends, colleagues or other entrepreneurs. Only 18% of high-growth men entrepreneurs have a partnership with their wives (4%) or a family member (14%).

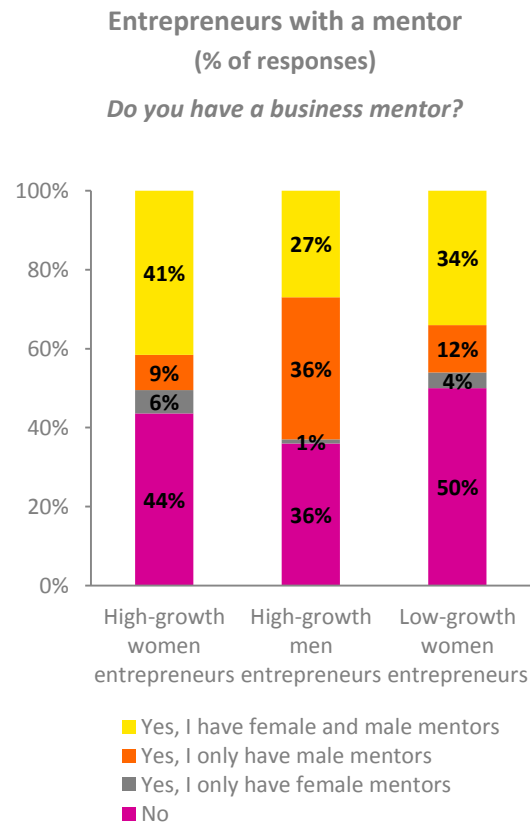


*\*Others include friends from school, other entrepreneurs, specialists in other areas of the value chain of their companies, and other people from their networks.*

### 4. THEY SEEK MENTORSHIP

The data suggest significant differences regarding the use of mentoring or coaching. While 64% of men have mentors who help them focus on business issues, 56% of high-growth women entrepreneurs and 50% of low-growth entrepreneurs access this type of support. Despite the fact that at least half of the entrepreneurs in all three groups have some kind of guidance, it is evident that for both sexes, male mentors are more prevalent. Only 1% of men and 6% of high-growth women have only women mentors, while 9% of high-growth women and 36% of men have only male mentors.

Both male and female entrepreneurs would benefit from having greater diversity in their teams of mentors and advisors.



## 5. THEY START THEIR BUSINESSES IN SECTORS TRADITIONALLY TIED TO WOMEN

Another important contrast between the sexes results from comparing sectors where they have their businesses. Women entrepreneurs, both high and low-growth, are disproportionately found in more traditional sectors or sectors associated with their sex. That is, women entrepreneurs are more concentrated in sectors such as food and beverages, services, manufacturing and retail, while men tend to focus on less traditional sectors which require more innovation, such as Internet or software development.

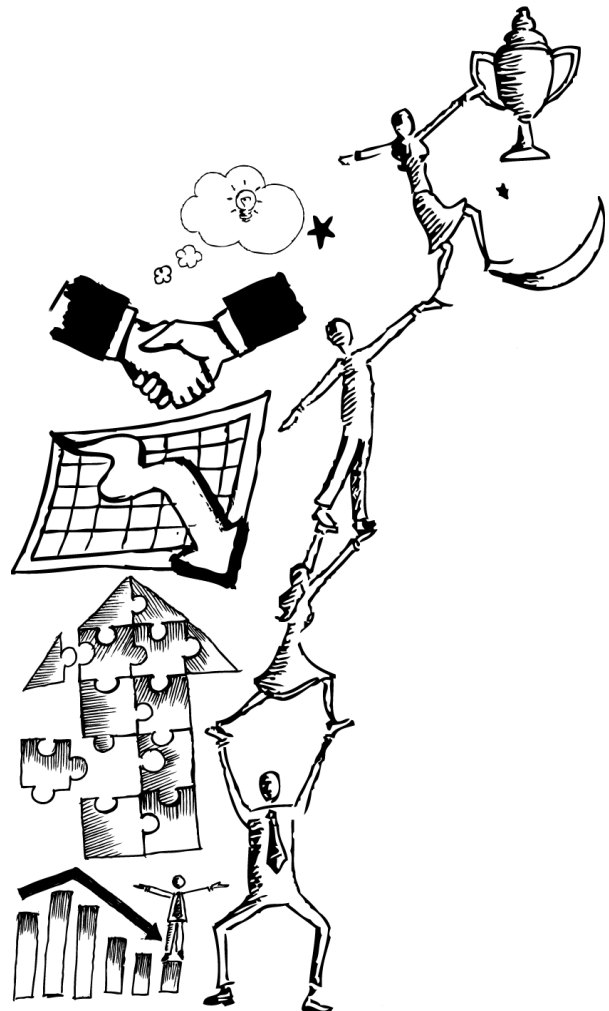
## 6. THEY HAVE LESS INTERNATIONAL REACH

Companies of high-growth men entrepreneurs have better international exposure than those of women entrepreneurs, as more men have been able to place their products and services in regional or international markets. This difference could be explained not only by the ambitions women entrepreneurs had when they started their business, since 76% were not expecting to expand internationally, but also by their more cautious attitudes. They tend to partner with people from their inner circles; therefore, their partners and mentors, like them, often do not have a professional or international background.

## 7. THEY TAKE LESS RISK THAN MEN

Women and men have different entrepreneurial profiles since each group faces challenges and makes decisions differently.

As shown by the data, high-growth men generally are more risk seeking than women, as they tend to venture into more innovative sectors and to partner with people outside their families, such as colleagues and other entrepreneurs. Also, 67% of these men have launched ventures more than once, as compared to 38% of high-growth women and 25% of low-growth women entrepreneurs who have owned more than one company.



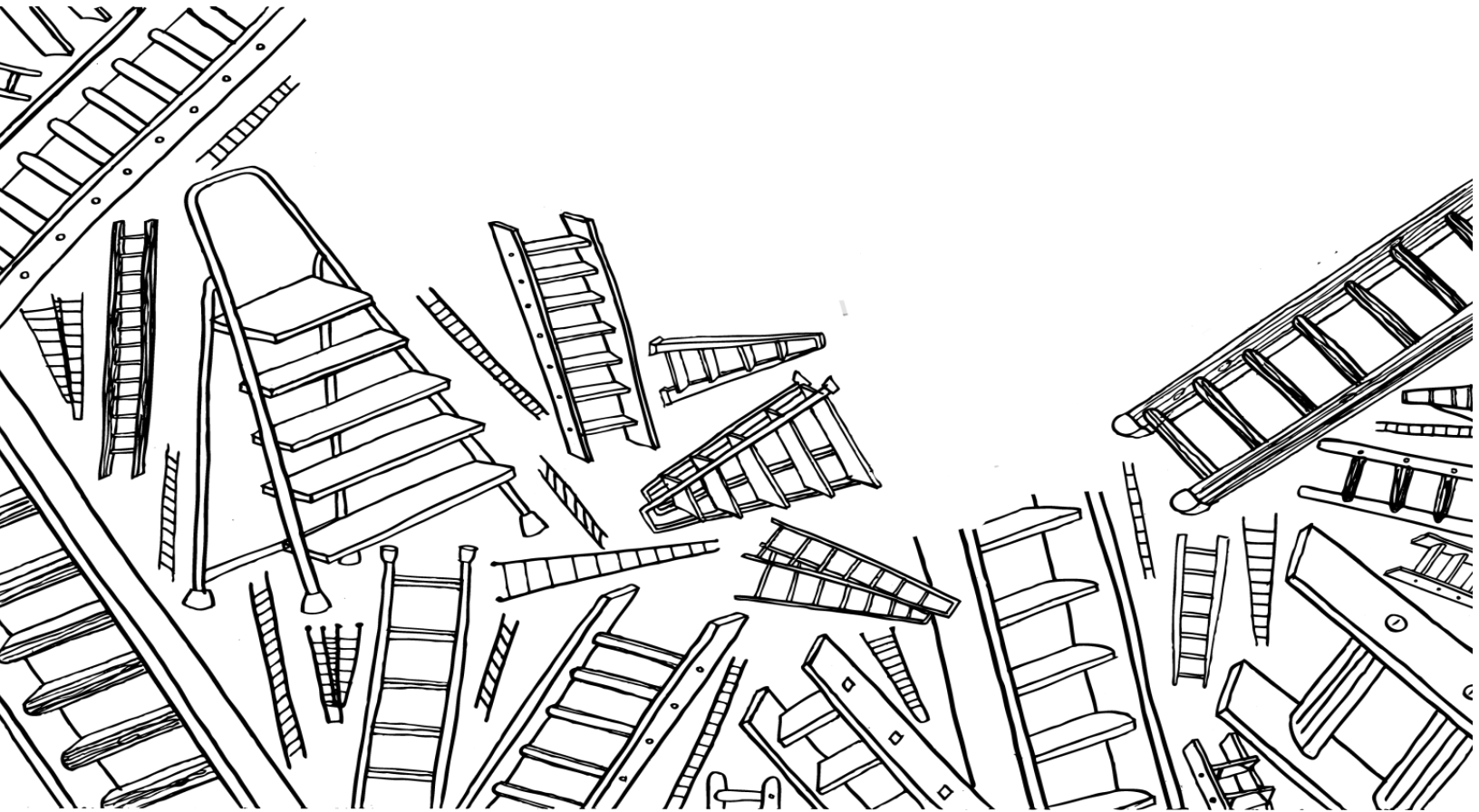
## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
Main sectors where they started their business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Food and beverages</li> <li>▪ Business services</li> <li>▪ Manufacturing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Software</li> <li>▪ Internet</li> <li>▪ Business services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Food and beverages</li> <li>▪ Business services</li> <li>▪ Retail</li> </ul>
International reach	40%	71%	27%
Main ambition when starting their businesses	Medium or large domestic company	Multi-million dollar company with international reach	Medium or large domestic company
Is the principal owner	73%	35%	68%
Principal partner (or co-owner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family</li> <li>▪ Spouse or partner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Friends/family</li> <li>▪ Colleagues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family</li> <li>▪ Spouse or partner</li> </ul>

*Note: Fields shaded in yellow denote significant differences with the other groups studied.*

# WHAT DRIVES THEM AND WHO SUPPORTS THEM?

- High-growth women entrepreneurs are driven by opportunity to start their businesses.
- In starting and moving forward with their businesses, they rely on their inner circles (spouses, family and friends).

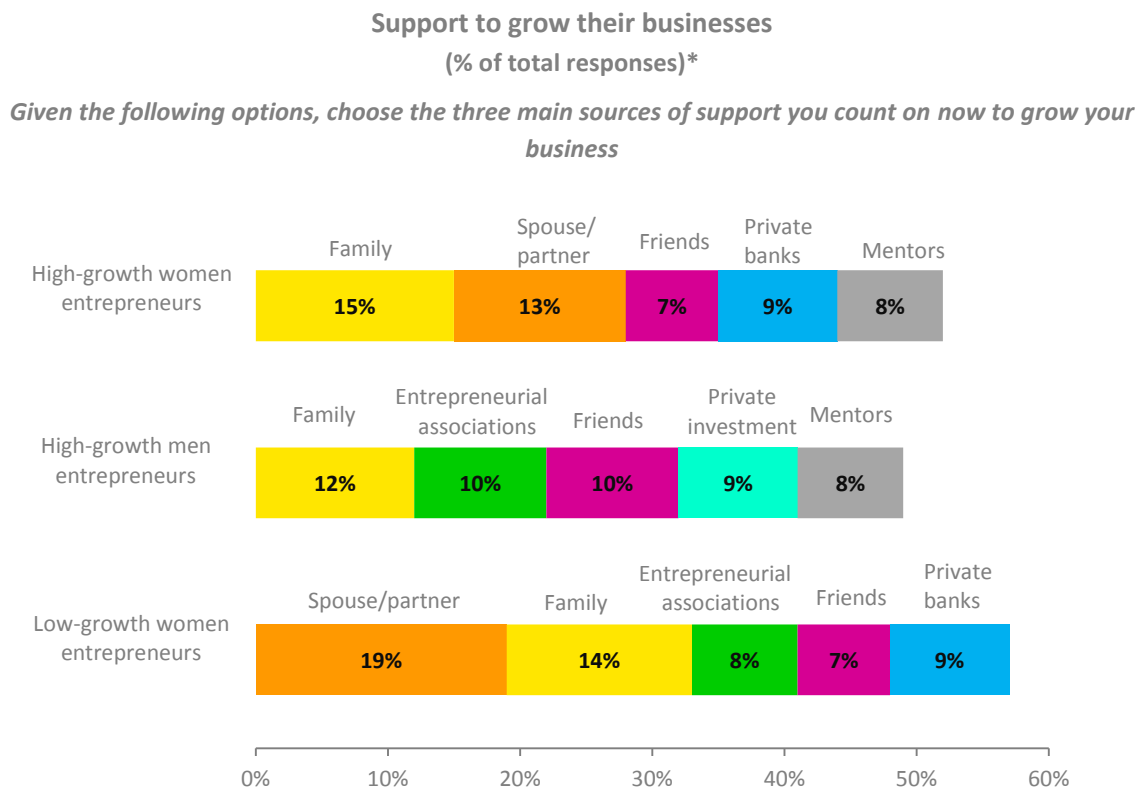




## 1. THEY RELY ON THEIR INNER CIRCLES TO LAUNCH AND GROW THEIR VENTURES

For women entrepreneurs, **support from their inner circles** is critical when starting their own businesses. Surveyed women stated that their spouses, family, and friends were their main supporters when they started their companies and continue to be so when they decide to grow them. Women entrepreneurs are characterized by relying on their spouses and families to support them throughout their entrepreneurial ventures and in their personal lives.

For men entrepreneurs, support from their family, friends and spouses was also critical at the time of starting their businesses, although as time passes by and as their businesses expand, they rely on support from other sources. In taking their businesses to the next level, men tend to rely more on their mentors, private investors, and entrepreneurial networks, which are only the second choice for women entrepreneurs.



\* Other sources of support with low response rates are not included in the chart. These include sources such as government, incubators, networks, other entrepreneurs, private sector advisors, angel investors, seed capital and venture capital funds.

## 2. THEIR MAIN SOURCE OF FINANCING IS THEIR INNER CIRCLES

The main source of financing for women entrepreneurs is their inner circles, both when they start up their businesses and when they expand them.

In line with the main sources of financial support for women entrepreneurs, when starting their businesses many of them use their savings or build their capital with the help of their families or friends. In general, this is due to the lack of financing options available to entrepreneurs, both men and women, when they begin their businesses. Banks are designed to lend based on collateral rather than on the potential of a project, and other sources, such as angel investors, seed capital or venture capital, are still not that common in some countries in the region.

Successful women entrepreneurs who raised capital from investors, such as angel investors, seed capital, or venture capital funds, did so with the intention of obtaining something more than just capital: smart capital.

The data indicate that 70% of high-growth women entrepreneurs obtain funds from their families, friends or from their own savings, which is lower than the rate of low-growth women entrepreneurs and higher than the 62% of high-growth men entrepreneurs who do it. The rest of them capitalize through loans or funds provided by the private and/or public sector.

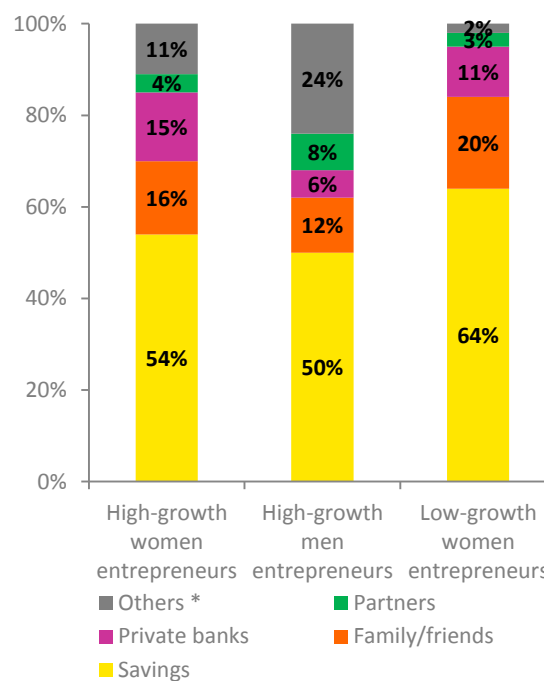
The second most common source of financing for women entrepreneurs is bank loans. Initially, to venture, 15% of high-growth

women and 6% of high-growth men obtain financing through banks. Later in the development cycle, around 28% of high-growth women and 17% of high-growth men use bank loans to finance their growth.

This difference could be explained by the support they find in other sources, such as angel investors, seed capital, venture capital, or private investors. This is due to the fact that **men entrepreneurs tend to move further away from their inner circles** seeking to diversify their sources of support and financing. So one can conclude that men are willing to take more risks and try to surround themselves with people who have the knowledge to add value to their businesses.

### Sources of financing used for venture (% of responses)

*Which was the main source of financing you used to start your venture?*



\*Others include financing sources, such as the government, incubators, accelerators, and private investors.

### 3. THEY ARE MOTIVATED BY A PASSION FOR OWNING THEIR OWN BUSINESSES

High-growth women entrepreneurs were driven by a market opportunity to start their businesses, a factor that influences their motivation and ambition to manage their organizations and plan how far they want to get. Just like high-growth men entrepreneurs, these women entrepreneurs placed their stakes on an idea that sought to satisfy a need in the market, which they identified or created by introducing their products or services. An 88% of these women are motivated to do what it takes for their companies to continue growing.

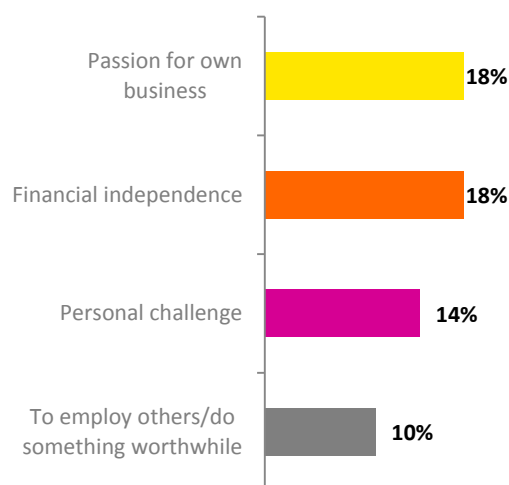
High-growth women entrepreneurs have shown strong passion for their ideas and businesses from the onset. This urge to have their own businesses was the main driver behind in their becoming entrepreneurs, and continues to be one of their main reasons to grow their businesses. Likewise, they rely on their desires to be economically independent and see their businesses as personal challenges, which motivate them in their expansion and development plans. In addition, 15% of women entrepreneurs believe that doing something worthwhile, such as providing employment, is a motivator to keep them focused on growing their businesses.

Similarly to high-growth women, the other two groups of entrepreneurs are mainly motivated by a passion for owning their businesses and the financial independence they achieve.

#### Motivations of high-growth women entrepreneurs (% of responses)\*

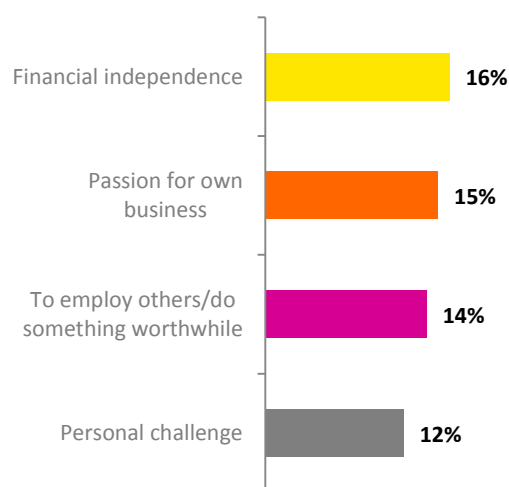
*Choose your motivations for starting up your business*

**When they started their businesses**



*Choose your motivations for growing your business*

**As their businesses grow**



*\*Other motivations with low response rates are not included in the chart. These include motivators such as make more money, be an example for children or other women, flexibility and left my family be protected.*

# WHAT ARE THEIR DREAMS AND AMBITIONS?

- Six out of ten high-growth women entrepreneurs say that they have exceeded their initial goals.
- Only two out of ten feel completely satisfied with their achievements.
- Almost 90% replied that they want to continue growing their businesses, and 88% are willing to do whatever it takes to take their businesses to the next level.



## 1. AMBITION FOR GROWTH ... BALANCING THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIVES

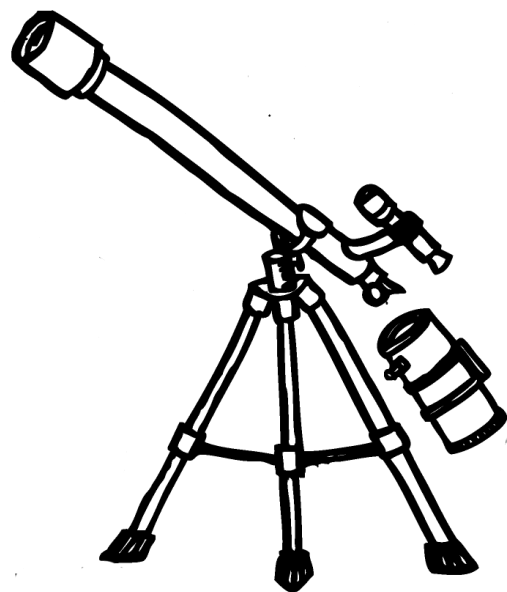
High-growth women entrepreneurs have the motivation and determination to achieve their objectives of improving and developing their businesses. Ambition is the engine that motivates them to abandon conformity.

Despite the fact that 65% of them state that they have exceeded their initial objective, 88% of women entrepreneurs assert that they are willing to do what it takes to bring their businesses to the next level. This is due primarily to the fact that many of these entrepreneurs do not feel that they have achieved enough, and that there is room to grow their businesses and set new goals.

It is worth noting that there are no significant differences in satisfaction levels between men and women when they reach the same growth level. However, when analyzing their original ambitions, men had greater original aspirations than women. While 61% of men sought to turn their enterprises into

companies with international scope, only 26% of women wanted to achieve this goal. At the initial stages of their ventures, women entrepreneurs tend to show less ambition than men entrepreneurs. However, as their businesses grow and consolidate, these women entrepreneurs become as ambitious as men entrepreneurs, creating plans to move their businesses forward and to expand them to new markets.

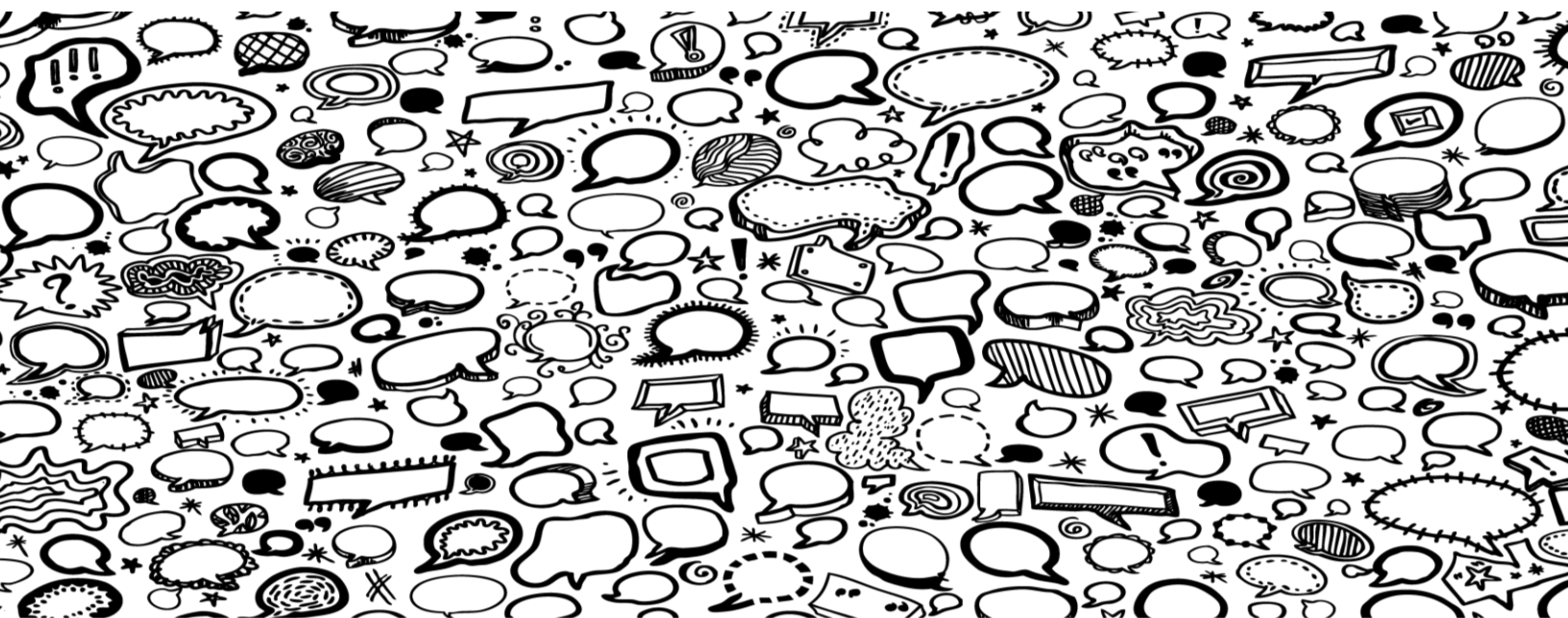
Women entrepreneurs understand the implications of having to carry out other tasks at home and take care of their children, in addition to seeing their businesses grow. Even though they are willing to do what it takes to grow their businesses, they seek to maintain a work life balance.





# WHAT CHALLENGES DO THEY FACE?

- The two biggest challenges high-growth women entrepreneurs face when starting their businesses are the lack of financing and the fear of failure.
- As their businesses grow, they face conflicts regarding the multiple roles they play.



## **1. LACK OF FUNDING IS THE MAIN CHALLENGE IN STARTING A BUSINESS**

For both men and women entrepreneurs lack of financing is the main challenge they have to face. When they are starting their businesses, they usually obtain their funding primarily from their personal savings and from funds provided by their family and friends. In this first phase, they perceive that access to other institutional financing sources is complicated or does not exist. In the expansion phase, this lack of funding is no longer a major barrier for men entrepreneurs, but it continues to be a barrier for women entrepreneurs. This could be explained by the fact that it is easier for men (thanks to their networks) to access other funding sources, such as angel investors, seed or venture capital funds.

## **2. IN TIME THEY GAIN CONFIDENCE, BUT ALSO START TO WORRY ABOUT THE BALANCE OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIVES**

For both high and low-growth women entrepreneurs, the fear of failure is the main personal challenge they have to deal with when they decide to start their businesses. As their businesses grow, they start gaining more confidence in themselves and in their ability to manage their businesses successfully. However, in the growth stage, maintaining a balance between their family and professional lives becomes their main personal challenge. During the interviews conducted with high-growth-women entrepreneurs in the region, most of them thought that starting their own businesses would give them greater flexibility, especially in balancing their professional and personal

lives. In order to reach this balance, they rely on the support provided by their families or friends. Although playing both roles at the same time is not an easy task, women in this situation believe they are a source of inspiration for their children, and a role model for other women.

## **3. DISCRIMINATION IS LEFT BEHIND WHEN THEY MOVE FORWARD**

Our study showed that 88% of high-growth **women entrepreneurs do not feel discriminated against because of their sex**, which reveals the progress and positioning of this group. However, many of them said that at the beginning of their businesses they had more difficulties than men in opening doors and making their business grow. Men entrepreneurs recognize there is still a problem in the entrepreneurial environment regarding discrimination against women, and they believe this represents the main factor that limits women's development and performance as entrepreneurs.

## **4. BEING CONNECTED IS A NECESSITY AND AN ADVANTAGE**

Women master the technical knowledge and management skills they need to compete in the sectors where their businesses operate. They have acquired knowledge since they started up their businesses and have developed their skills as a result of experience. However, they are challenged when they have to connect with the outside, as their lack of commercial or negotiation skills and limited or ineffective contact networks hinder their potential to grow their businesses.

## 5. ONE THIRD OF ENTREPRENEURS DO NOT FACE CULTURAL CHALLENGES

Around 30% of women and men entrepreneurs believe that they are not faced with any socio-cultural barriers that prevent them from making their companies grow. However, within the group of entrepreneurs who say they are dealing with challenges linked to society and culture, the majority mentioned that their biggest challenge is the poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media.

## 6. THEY DEAL WITH CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE ECONOMIC REALITY IN THEIR COUNTRIES

In general, the challenges related to the market and business environment that entrepreneurs of the three groups are dealing with are linked to the economic situation of each country.

Economic weakness, uncompetitive regulatory environment, insecurity, and the lack of government support are major obstacles that entrepreneurs have to face in order to develop their businesses.

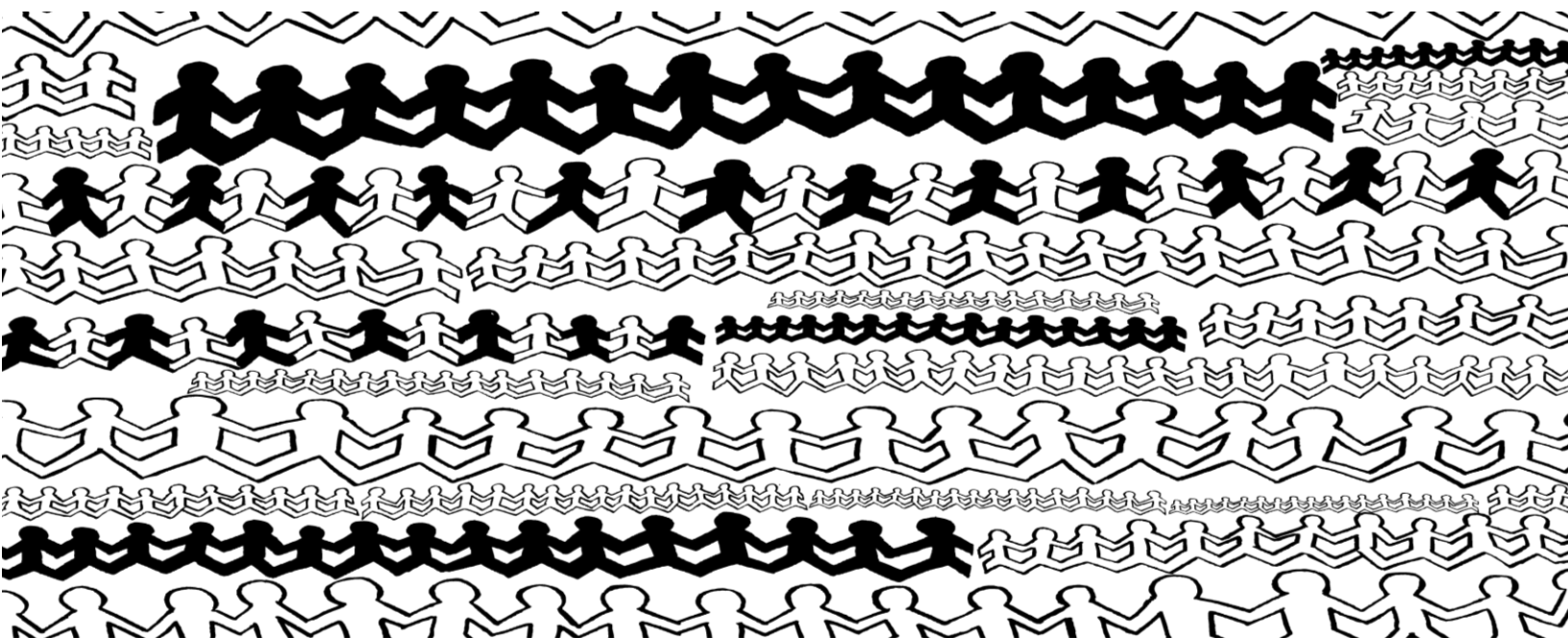
## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
<b>Main personal challenge faced</b>			
When they start their businesses	Fear of failure	Maintaining work/life balance	Fear of failure
In growing their businesses	Maintaining work/life balance	Do not face any challenge	Maintaining work/life balance
<b>Main social challenge faced</b>			
When they start their business	Do not face any challenge	Do not face any challenge	Do not face any challenge
In growing their businesses	Do not face any challenge	Do not face any challenge	Do not face any challenge
<b>Main business challenge faced</b>			
When they start their business	Lack of access to funding	Lack of access to funding	Lack of access to funding/strong competition*
In growing their businesses	Lack of access to funding	Quality of the labor force	Lack of access to funding

\*Strong competition refers to a great number of businesses offering the same product as the entrepreneurs do.

# WHAT DO HIGH-GROWTH MEN ENTREPRENEURS THINK ABOUT THEM?

- “The difference between men and women is that men are more willing to take risks.”
- “For women it is difficult to find a work-life balance, especially when they have children.”



Despite the increase in the number of businesses led by women in the last few years, high-growth **men entrepreneurs still perceive that women entrepreneurs have to overcome more barriers than they do to be successful.** While men acknowledge that all entrepreneurs, regardless of their sex, face obstacles linked to the business environment, they recognize that women face a series of challenges linked to women’s traditional roles in society and family life.

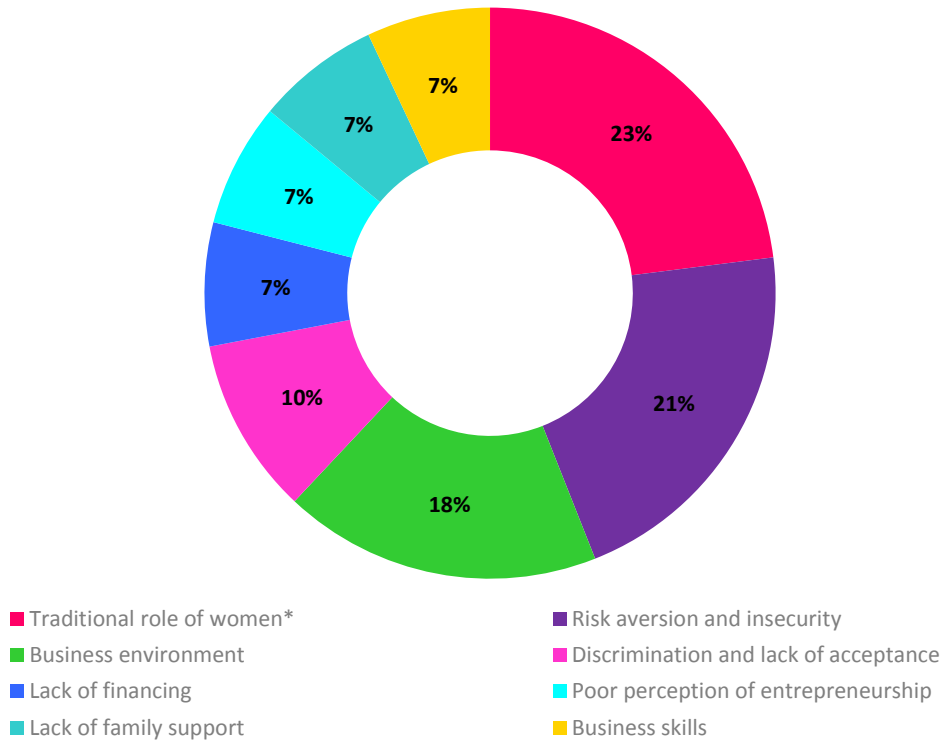
In addition to the challenges faced by women in looking after their families and children,

men also say women have to overcome their lack of self-confidence and their aversion to risk in creating, running and expanding their businesses. When asked, 25% of men say that women entrepreneurs are not fully convinced that they will be successful when they start up their businesses.

In spite of their opinions regarding the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, 90% of men believe that women are as capable as they are to create businesses.

**Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs according to men**  
(% of responses)

*Which do you believe are the five main reasons in your country keeping women entrepreneurs from becoming high-growth entrepreneurs?*



\* Maintaining a work-life balance, conflict among the several roles performed by a woman, and activities related to their household and childcare responsibilities.



# WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS WHO WANT TO GROW THEIR BUSINESSES?

PROVIDED BY HIGH-GROWTH WOMEN AND MEN ENTREPRENEURS

<p><i>What do women entrepreneurs say is the best advice they received?</i></p> 	<p><i>What advice should women entrepreneurs give to other women who want to start businesses?</i></p> 	<p><i>What advice do men entrepreneurs offer to women?</i></p> 
<p><b>1. LISTEN TO YOURSELF</b></p> <p><i>“Do not always listen to others, listen to yourself instead.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Chile</i></p> <p><b>2. PAY YOURSELF FOR YOUR WORK</b></p> <p><i>“If you are a woman entrepreneur, pay yourself a salary, just as if you were any other employee.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Colombia</i></p> <p><b>3. RELY ON OTHERS</b></p> <p><i>“If you want to go fast... do it alone, if you want to go far... you have to be accompanied.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Argentina</i></p>	<p><b>1. BE MORE CONFIDENT</b></p> <p><i>“Be confident. This will allow you to fight and show the potential that you still do not know you have.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Mexico</i></p> <p><i>“Be self-confident, this will give you perseverance, a lot of potential and a lot of energy to move forward in difficult times.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Mexico</i></p> <p><i>“Be confident, enthusiastic and believe in what you are doing. If you believe in yourself, things will work out. If you believe in your business, think beyond the horizon you are facing.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Peru</i></p> <p><i>“Be confident even if you do not know how to implement your idea. It is important to go slowly.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Colombia</i></p> <p><b>2. LOOK FOR TRAINING AND SUPPORT</b></p> <p><i>“Look for training and adequate funding to bring your idea forward.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Colombia</i></p> <p><i>“Rely on mentors and keep training to identify your needs.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Mexico</i></p> <p><b>3. GO AHEAD, IT IS YOUR IDEA AND YOUR COMPANY</b></p> <p><i>“Talk about your idea. People think that if they talk about their idea, someone is going to steal it, but only an entrepreneur can transform an idea into a company.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Argentina</i></p> <p><i>“Do not allow someone to tell you “NO,” since you know your business better than anyone else. You should have confidence and believe in what you are doing.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Colombia</i></p> <p><i>“Understand your competitive advantage; we have the ability to take on any challenge.”</i>  <i>Woman Entrepreneur – Colombia</i></p>	<p><b>1. HAVE CONFIDENCE AND DO NOT BE AFRAID TO FAIL</b></p> <p><i>“Women entrepreneurs are aggressive and assertive, but I think that it takes them a little more time to fulfil their objectives because they are too analytical. To be successful you must be confident, take risks, and not be afraid to fail.”</i>  <i>Man Entrepreneur – Jamaica</i></p> <p><i>“Develop confidence in ignoring the stereotypes associated with women.”</i>  <i>Man Entrepreneur – Costa Rica</i></p> <p><b>2. TAKE RISKS</b></p> <p><i>“The difference between men and women is that men are more willing to take risks. Also, women and men measure success differently.”</i>  <i>Man Entrepreneur – Argentina</i></p>

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem for women through:**

- Access to finance
- Contact networks
- Support and learning



# Access to finance

## A common challenge

The main challenge faced by entrepreneurs in the region is the lack of access to financing and capital.

More than 50% of women entrepreneurs have funded their company with personal resources together with funding from family and friends. In most cases, as their companies start to grow, they look for other financing options, such as bank loans. On the other hand, men entrepreneurs tend to access more diverse sources of funding and equity funding, such as angel investors, and seed capital and venture capital funds.

With greater knowledge and access to different types of funding, women entrepreneurs could avail themselves of a more diverse mix of capital to expand their operations, enter new markets, integrate new technologies, and hire key talent to help them improve their companies' operations and strategy, among other benefits. Following are some recommendations on how to increase access to finance for women entrepreneurs:

### **1. THEY WANT SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST FINANCING**

The process of securing sources of financing, including external equity, implies that the business plan be thoroughly analyzed. The feedback arising from potential investors can provide valuable suggestions to women entrepreneurs around how to grow their business more effectively.

Women entrepreneurs should look for smart capital, which also provides mentorship and guidance that could increase their ventures' probability of success.

### **2. ENCOURAGE THEM TO SEEK NON-TRADITIONAL FINANCING**

The different players of the entrepreneurial ecosystem should focus on increasing funding instruments and distribution channels to encourage and increase entrepreneurial activity in the region. Thus, it is necessary to evaluate the design of low-risk financing instruments, and to design strategies to increase public and private sector investment in order to accelerate growth in new ventures.

### **3. INFORM WOMEN ABOUT DIFFERENT FINANCING RESOURCES**

To grow their businesses to the next level, high-growth men entrepreneurs tend to rely more on their mentors, private investors and entrepreneurial networks, while women tend to rely less on these. Thus, it is necessary to encourage women entrepreneurs to diversify their funding sources as well as to identify when they need to raise this capital.

Accelerators and incubators play an important role in attracting more women entrepreneurs, as these organizations could increase the entrepreneurs' mentoring and networking resources.

# Contact network

## Being an entrepreneur is not a lonely job

The three types of entrepreneurs analyzed believe that having an effective network group is one of the main factors that contribute to the success of an entrepreneur. However, women entrepreneurs from both groups reveal that they have limited or ineffective networks, which represents one of the challenges most often mentioned.

Due to the different roles that women hold, they tend to have limited time and locations for networking and establishing new contacts; the time during which they are not working, they spend with their families, their partners, and taking care of their home.

Consequently, it is important to use players in the entrepreneurial ecosystem such as investors, universities, the labor market and the media, as platforms for exposure and as links to the business environment. Following are some recommendations on how to increase their networking skills:

### 1. MAKE EDUCATION MORE FLEXIBLE AND OFFER INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

For women entrepreneurs, being exposed to more enriching academic environments and international experiences could make a difference in the rate of growth in their businesses, their ability to create connections and generate a wider contact network, and their ambitions for what they would like to achieve within their businesses. Therefore, developing *more flexible higher education programs* (bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees) is recommended, so that

women entrepreneurs can update their knowledge and increase their experiences.

### 2. MAXIMIZE THE POTENTIAL OF THEIR CONTACT NETWORKS

Women entrepreneurs need to focus on networks that will aid their businesses' growth. They should have a clear understanding of their current relationships, and the relationships they wish to have, and they need to be selective in their efforts to expand their networks. This begins with an honest inventory of their skills and the needs of the company, followed by a deliberate effort to connect to the right key people.

Such a network of contacts will allow them to easily be able to contact key people who will help them find new opportunities and ideas or different perspectives in order to lead their business to the next level; create close professional circles that will supplement their knowledge with topics that are relevant to the successful operation and management of their businesses; and build circles of trust in which they will acquire advice, guidance and objective feedback.

Furthermore, as businesses grow and consolidate, women entrepreneurs may choose to formalize their contact networks by establishing a Board of Directors or Advisory Board, which allow them to acquire guidance and coaching over time, in addition to getting feedback that could be applied when growing their businesses. Similarly, contact networks can foster synergies through the exchange of

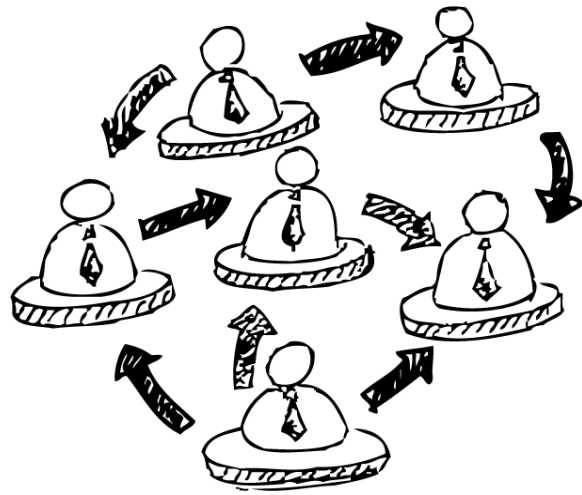
management skills and best practices within specific industries.

### 3. CREATE INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

Nearly ninety percent of women entrepreneurs in the study indicated that they would do anything within their reach in order to maximize the potential of their businesses, and given the fact that exposure abroad often leads to valuable new relationships. To do so, women should consider: (i) associating themselves with organizations that have global reach and presence, and reaching out to commercial and sectorial chambers; (ii) participating in public or private trade missions with other countries; (iii) establishing contacts with possible buyers or commercial partners outside of their domestic market in order to explore the possibility of collaboration, (iv) attending business entrepreneurship events in other countries; (v) maintaining ongoing contact with business accelerators and other organizations which support entrepreneurial activities.

### 4. ESTABLISH A HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM

Based on the interviews done with women entrepreneurs, one observes that they have difficulty delegating their companies' daily activities to others, which leads to their not being able to focus as much on the strategic end of their businesses. Women entrepreneurs should create teams that enable them to delegate the operation and supervision of daily tasks.





# Support and learning

## Improving the entrepreneurial environment

Given the vast economic potential that women entrepreneurs represent in the region, it is important that governments and society take part in creating supportive resources that will promote women's entrepreneurship and establishment in the business sphere. Following are some recommendations on how to improve the entrepreneurial environment:

### 1. IMPROVE CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

According to the survey data, 80% of the women entrepreneurs interviewed have children. The balance between family and professional life is their main challenge when trying to expand their companies. They have expressed that having higher quality childcare will allow them to concentrate on other activities, whether professional or personal.

In general, the high-growth male entrepreneurs are younger than the high-growth women entrepreneurs (60% of the women entrepreneurs are over 40 vs. 40 % of high-growth male entrepreneurs). This reflects the effect of low quality childcare, which could cause delay in activity for younger women entrepreneurs.

Governments and the private sector should create programs that promote childcare, including specialized daycare centers (e.g., those that can attend to sick children, or provide support in other emergencies) and possibly even daycare co-located with business incubator or accelerator facilities in

order to increase the number of younger women entrepreneurs.

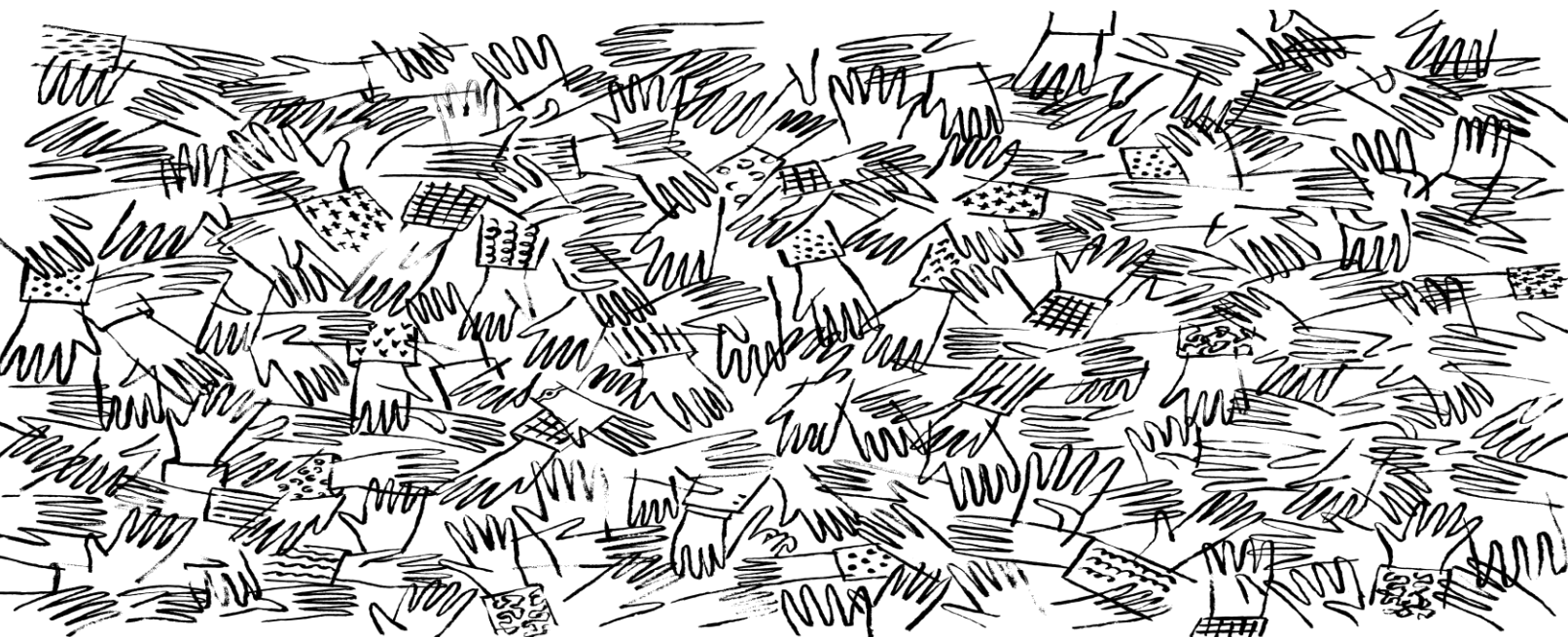
### 2. CELEBRATE SUCCESS STORIES

Celebrating and recognizing the accomplishment of women entrepreneurs can help to build positive perceptions of their role in the business sphere. Furthermore, these successful women could become role models for others to follow. In promoting their achievements and how they have overcome their obstacles, they may provide other women entrepreneurs with inspiration and information to help them carry their businesses forward.

Government, entrepreneurship support organizations, the private sector, and the media play crucial roles in promoting examples of successful women entrepreneurs. It is important they provide opportunities to share them at national and regional levels.



## COMPARISONS BETWEEN GROUPS



# Who are they?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
Age Prevailing response	30 – 39 32%	30 – 39 40%	40 – 49 35%
Marital status Prevailing response	Married or partnered 63%	Married or partnered 72%	Married or partnered 59%
Has children	78%	67%	69%
Holds a bachelor's degree	76%	90%	85%
Has studied abroad	35%	60%	32%
Has parents with a bachelor's degree	48%	70%	51%
Come from entrepreneurial family	75%	76%	66%
Prevailing MIH <sup>26</sup>	High and medium- high 72%	High and medium- high 96%	High and medium- high 73%

Note: Fields shaded in yellow denote significant differences with the other groups studied.

<sup>26</sup> MIH: Monthly income per household ranges were derived from household surveys income data obtained in each country's national statistics office.

# What defines their entrepreneurial activities?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
Main sector where he/she started his/her business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food and beverages</li> <li>Business services</li> <li>Manufacturing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Software</li> <li>Internet</li> <li>Business services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food and beverages</li> <li>Business services</li> <li>Retail</li> </ul>
Reason for starting a business in that sectors	Market opportunity Technical expertise/ knowledge	Market opportunity Technical expertise/ knowledge	Technical expertise/ knowledge Market opportunity
International reach	40%	71%	27%
Main ambition when he/she started his/her	Medium or large domestic company	Multi-million dollar company with international reach	Medium or large domestic company within their country
Is the principal owner (majority shareholder)	73%	35%	68%
Principal partner (or co-owner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family</li> <li>Spouse or partner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends/family</li> <li>Colleagues</li> <li>Other entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family</li> <li>Spouse or partner</li> </ul>
Has a mentor	56%	64%	50%
Current business is his/her first business	66%	40%	84%
Has considered closing the business	26%	24%	26%

Note: Fields shaded in yellow denote significant differences with the other group studied.

# Who supports them and what motivates them?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
<b>Main sources of support</b>			
When starting their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family 56%</li> <li>Spouse</li> <li>Friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family 53%</li> <li>Friends</li> <li>Spouse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family 63%</li> <li>Spouse</li> <li>Friends</li> </ul>
In growing their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family 37%</li> <li>Spouse</li> <li>Friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family 31%</li> <li>Entrepreneurship associations</li> <li>Spouse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spouse 41%</li> <li>Family</li> <li>Private banks</li> </ul>
<b>Main sources of financing</b>			
When starting their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings/family/friends 88%</li> <li>Private banks</li> <li>Other partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings/family/friends 79%</li> <li>Other partners</li> <li>Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings/family/friends 95%</li> <li>Private banks</li> </ul>
In growing their businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings/family/friends 82%</li> <li>Private banks</li> <li>Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings 74%</li> <li>Private banks</li> <li>Venture capital</li> <li>Other partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal savings/family/friends 84%</li> <li>Private banks</li> <li>Other partners</li> </ul>
<b>Main motivation</b>			
When starting their businesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Passion for own business</li> <li>2. Economic independence</li> <li>3. Personal challenge</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Passion for own business</li> <li>2. Personal challenge</li> <li>3. Economic independence</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic independence</li> <li>2. Passion for own business</li> <li>3. Personal challenge</li> </ol>
In growing their businesses	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Economic independence</li> <li>2. Passion for own business</li> <li>3. Doing something worthwhile</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Personal challenge</li> <li>2. Passion for own business</li> <li>3. Earning more money</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Doing something worthwhile</li> <li>2. Passion for own business</li> <li>3. Economic independence</li> </ol>



# What are their goals and aspirations?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

	High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
Agrees with the following statement: "What I have achieved with my business exceeds my initial expectations."	65%	68%	45%
Agrees with the following statement: "What I have achieved with my business is enough for me."	22%	21%	19%
Agrees with the following statement: "I want to keep on growing my business."	85%	83%	84%
Agrees that with the opportunity and the resources: "I would do whatever I had to do to take my business to its full potential."	88%	90%	91%

*Note: Fields shaded in yellow denote significant differences with the other groups studied.*

# What personal challenges do they face?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

Main personal challenges they faced when starting their businesses and currently have in growing their business

High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
<i>When starting their businesses</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fear of failure</li><li>2. Household/childcare responsibilities</li><li>3. Lack of confidence or motivation/poor self-image</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Maintaining work/life balance</li><li>2. Limited or ineffective networks</li><li>3. Lack of managerial knowledge</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Fear of failure</li><li>2. Lack of confidence or motivation/poor self-image</li><li>3. Household/childcare responsibilities</li></ol>
<i>In growing their businesses</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Maintaining work/life balance</li><li>2. Conflict among the various roles performed by a woman</li><li>3. Lack of commercial or negotiation skills</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Normal business risks</li><li>2. Maintaining work/life balance</li><li>3. Limited or ineffective networks</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Maintaining work/life balance</li><li>2. Lack of commercial or negotiation skills</li><li>3. Limited or ineffective networks</li></ol>

# What social and cultural challenges do they face?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

Main social and cultural challenges they faced when starting their businesses and currently have in growing their business

High-growth women entrepreneurs	High-growth men entrepreneurs	Low-growth women entrepreneurs
<i>In starting their businesses</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Sex discrimination</li><li>3. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li><li>3. Social/family pressure</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li><li>3. Sex discrimination</li></ol>
<i>To growing their business</i>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Conflicts with cultural values</li><li>3. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Conflicts with cultural values</li><li>3. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li></ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Did not face any challenges</li><li>2. Poor perception of entrepreneurship in society and the media</li><li>3. Conflicts with cultural values</li></ol>

# What business-related challenges do they face?

## WHERE DO THE DIFFERENCES LIE?

Main business-related challenges they faced when starting their businesses and currently have in growing their businesses

High-growth  
women  
entrepreneurs

High-growth  
men  
entrepreneurs

Low-growth  
women  
entrepreneurs

### *In starting their businesses*

1. Lack of access to funding
2. Strong competition in the sector
3. Lack of good coordinated support

1. Lack of access to funding
2. Quality of the available workforce
3. Complex regulatory environment

1. Lack of access to funding
2. Strong competition in the sector
3. Lack of good coordinated support

### *In growing their businesses*

1. Lack of access to funding
2. Strong competition in the sector
3. Quality of the available workforce

1. Quality of available workforce
2. Lack of access to funding
3. Complex regulatory environment

1. Lack of access to funding
2. Lack of good coordinated support
3. Quality of the available workforce

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