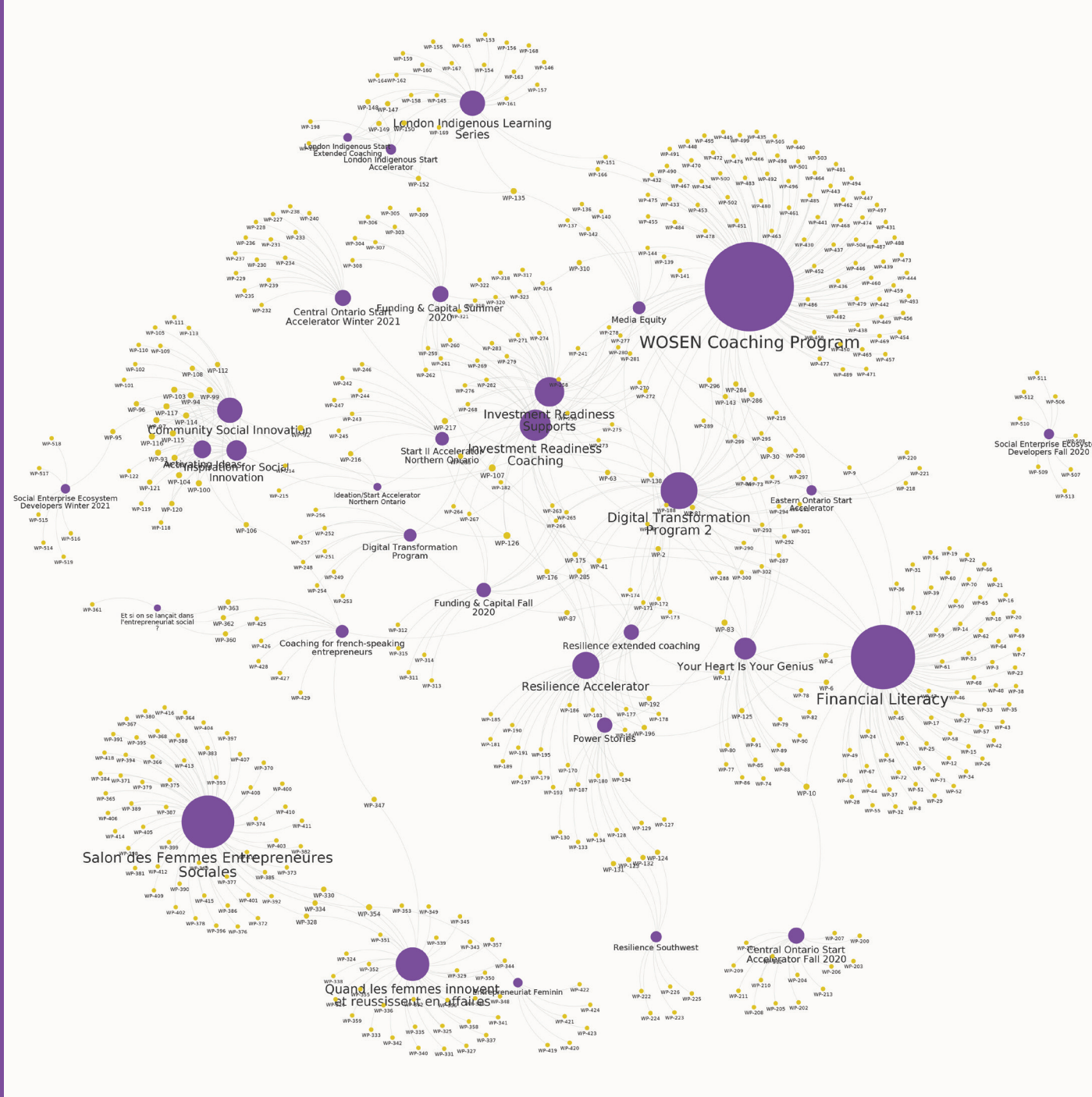


# The Story of WOSEN

Women of Ontario Social Enterprise Network (WOSEN)

OUTSTANDING BY STANDING TOGETHER

Summary  
Interim Report  
AUGUST 2019 – MARCH 2021



# Acknowledgements

The Women of Ontario Social Enterprise Network (WOSEN) collaborative consists of the following organizations, staff and funding partners.



**Pillar Nonprofit Network** strengthens individuals, organizations and enterprises invested in positive community impact. We support nonprofits, social enterprises and social innovators by sharing resources, exchanging knowledge and creating meaningful connections across the three pillars of nonprofit, business and government. Pillar Nonprofit Network believes that a connected network sparks collaboration and a willingness to lean on each other to help build an engaged inclusive and vibrant community. WOSEN staff: Rachel Berdan, Charles Blazevic, Eaman Fahmy, Kaleigh Rodgers, Caitlin Villeneuve, Mariam Waliji.



**Social Venture Connexion** SVX is a nonprofit, diversified financial services firm driving impact for investors, organizations, funds, and enterprises. We provide knowledge and insights, design strategies and products, manage funds, operate a platform for raising impact capital and making impact investments, and support systems change initiatives. We work across sectors that deliver meaningful impact: climate, food, equity, housing, and community real estate, helping investors find and make impact investments and issuers raise impact capital. WOSEN staff: Ashley Wang, Bridget Zhang, Li Jiang, Paula Sahyoun.



**Centre for Social Innovation** (CSI) Toronto is home to 1,000 nonprofits, charities and social ventures and provides these members with the spaces, knowledge, tools, resources and connections they need to grow their impact. For 15 years, CSI has been female-led. WOSEN staff: Jo Reynolds, Eyra Abraham, Mitlalie Makhani, Barnabe Geis, Andrea Tsang.



**Lean4Flourishing** works with members of the entrepreneurship ecosystem who seek to encourage entrepreneurial practice to realize key public policy goals and the Sustainable Development goals. L4F supports the co-creation of social and environmental impact centred entrepreneurship programming. L4F is female-led. WOSEN staff: Ondine Hogeboom, Ellen Martin and Sarah Naylor.



**NORDIK Institute** (Northern Ontario Research, Development, Ideas and Knowledge) is an innovative community-based research hub affiliated with Algoma University dedicated to building healthy, resilient communities by building capacity to achieve cultural, social, economic and environmental justice. It has established strong links with other research institutes, universities, and colleges. WOSEN staff: Dr. Jude Ortiz, Maureen Strickland, Krista Bissiallon, Diaymn Lauzon, and Elizabeth MacMillan. Graphic designer: Gabrielle Louttit.



**FedDev Ontario** works to advance and diversify the southern Ontario economy through funding opportunities and business services that support innovation and growth in Canada's most populous region. The Agency has delivered impressive results, which can be seen in southern Ontario businesses that are creating innovative technologies, improving their productivity, growing their revenues, and in the economic advancement of communities across the region.

*Proud recipient of support from the Government of Canada through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario.*



**Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship** (SEE) is an initiative led by NORDIK Institute to support the development of the social economy through the building capacity of social entrepreneurship by strengthening the ecosystem.

*This report does not necessarily reflect the views of the funder, member organizations of the WOSEN Collaborative or delivery partners.*

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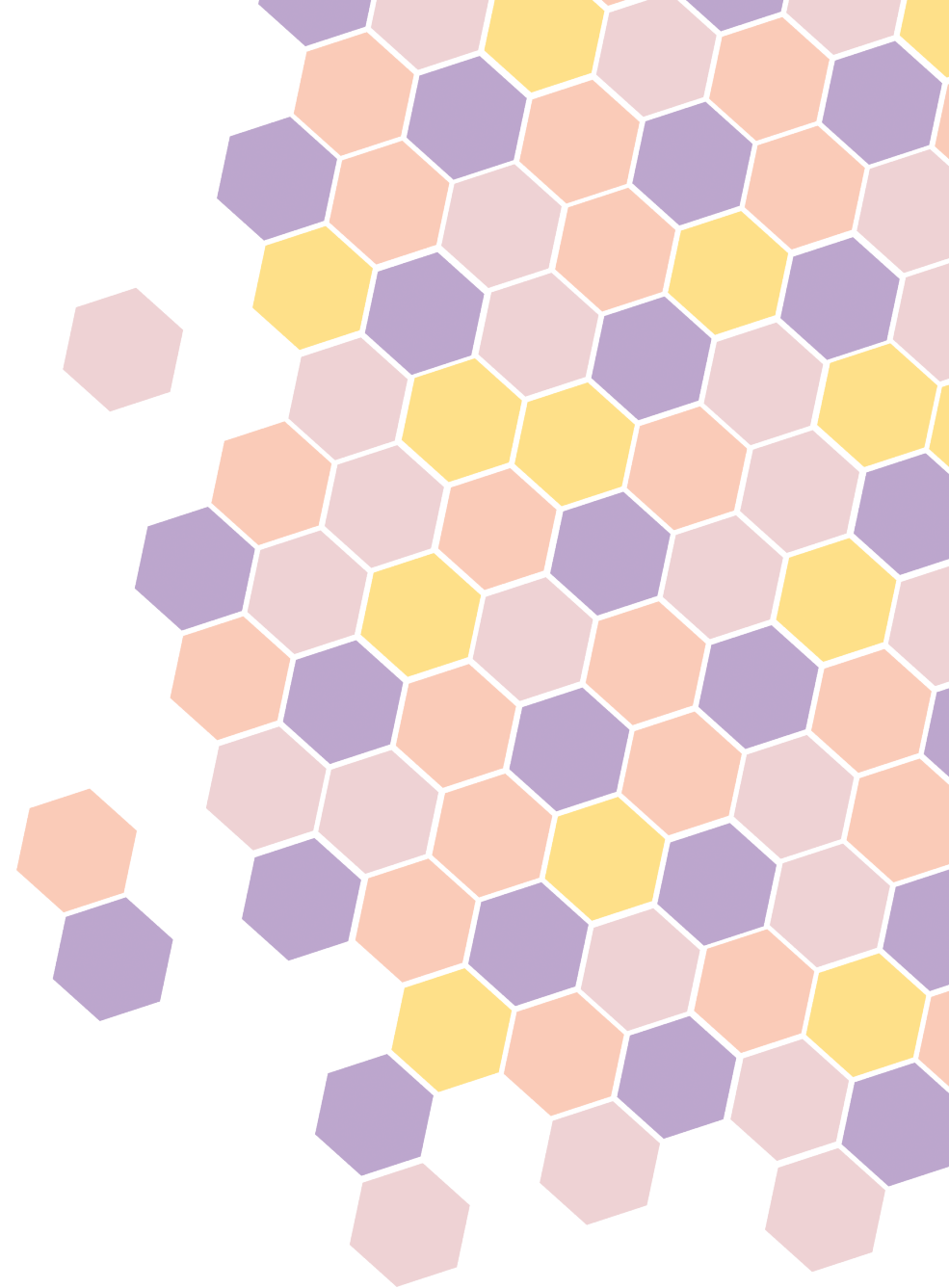
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# 1.0 Introduction

The Summary Interim Report provides an overview of the full Interim Report which captures the story of WOSEN, from launch to mid-way through its three-and-a-half-year initiative (2019-2023). The Summary aims to briefly convey the collaborative's reflection upon its activities, intentions, progress, learnings and impact in meeting its goals. The full report offers a deeper understanding of the complexity of issues that the collaborative lives with in undertaking this work, i.e. its co-management, emerging challenges and future direction in service of continuing to enhance practices that create a more equitable and inclusive women's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Both reports provide an opportunity to celebrate WOSEN's innovative approaches and successes. Key lessons from the WOSEN experience will shape the future of the program, and may prove critical to the reorganization of the current entrepreneurial system to foster the growth of women-owned and women-led ventures with a positive social and environmental impact.

The current social enterprise ecosystem has not typically been accommodating to everyone, often offering 'one-size fits all' programming, and prioritizing rapid growth businesses and sectors that are viewed to have the potential to become profitable quickly. As a result, women-identified and non-binary entrepreneurs, in particular, are underrepresented and underserved, and many stakeholders (e.g., mentors, coaches, investors) do not have the skills, tools, business networks or funding models to meet the unique needs of this demographic.



## What is WOSEN?

It is a province-wide collaborative led by Pillar Nonprofit Network in partnership with the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI), Social Venture Connexion (SVX), and NORDIK Institute (NORDIK) with support from Lean4Flourishing (L4F). Collectively they are delivering the Women of Ontario Social Enterprise Network (WOSEN).

### WOSEN COLLABORATIVE

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Grounded in an ecosystem of trust and respectful relationships

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Principle-focused approaches: WOSEN Design Principles

---

Collaboration and co-creation: programs and project operations

---

Professional development: individual and collaborative-wide

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### WHAT IS WOSEN DOING?

WOSEN is focused on catalyzing social innovation – reorganizing (or reimagining) the way the current entrepreneurial system works to enable underrepresented and underserved founders to participate and prosper in business and society.

**Goal:** Collectively create a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem across Ontario that supports the development of women-owned and women-led ventures that have a positive social and environmental impact, building a prosperous and resilient economy for all in Ontario.

WOSEN is dedicated to equity and inclusion, and seeks to support entrepreneurs from underserved and underrepresented communities, including those who are Indigenous, in rural or remote regions, racialized, immigrants or refugees, 2SLGBTQ+, or those with disabilities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> All programming is inclusive of Two-Spirit and non-binary/genderqueer individuals.

## How is WOSEN doing this?

WOSEN's collaborators are creating the critical resources, relational networks and stakeholder capacity that underpin a healthy, functioning and thriving ecosystem to foster more inclusive economies. There are three structural components: Developmental Evaluation, Program Evaluation and Knowledge Products. The Developmental Evaluation approach informs project and program development and evaluation, and the identification, creation and mobilization of knowledge products.

### 1. DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

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Linking evaluation to Theory of Change

---

Continuous reflection, assessment, design evolution and implementation

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### 2. PROGRAM EVALUATION

---

Centering the lived experience and knowledge of participants and other entrepreneur ecosystem stakeholders

---

Iterative design and delivery cycles

---

Responding to evolving needs

---

### 3. KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS

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Identification, creation and mobilization of products capturing WOSEN's learning and impact to inform and influence practitioners and the ecosystem stakeholders: business support, funding agencies, investors, researchers and policy makers.

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## Purpose of the report

The Summary Interim Report highlights the learnings, impact and progress in creating the critical resources, relational networks and stakeholder capacity that underpin a healthy, functioning and thriving ecosystem to foster more inclusive economies, and celebrates its innovative approaches and successes.

Progress in meeting its goals is assessed with a framework of changes in: i) knowledge; ii) attitudes and beliefs; iii) behaviours; and, iv) relationships and networks. These four areas underpin social innovation, sparking systemic change and the capacity to adapt. The data have been organized into two broad categories – learning and impact.

Learning centres on practitioners, i.e., what has been learned about founders served through WOSSEN and the SE ecosystem; what has been learned about yourself as a practitioner.

Impact focuses on participants, i.e., “the social, environmental or economic effect or change (either positive or negative - inclusive of outputs and outcomes), that occurs to people and communities as the result of an activity, project or policy undertaken” (Centre for Organizational Effectiveness, 2019, p.17).

The report is intended to provide:

1. A snapshot of the project’s developmental questions:  
Where are we now? What have we done/what led us to this point?  
What did we learn and what impact did it have? What needs to happen next, and how are we going to do it?

2. A document to share:

- a. Internally, within the collaborative and community partner organizations to strengthen capacity for:

assessing progress in meeting goals and deliverables; measuring impact; instilling a culture of continuous learning and improvement; creating environments supportive of knowledge generation and reflective practices; fostering respectful relationships and networks; and building a case for further investment and adoption of principle-based initiatives, specifically, WOSSEN Design Principles, in the social enterprise ecosystem.

- b. Externally, the public to:

increase practitioner capacity to support women-owned and women-led social enterprises; and influence diverse stakeholders and audiences, informing sector policies, planning, investment and perspectives, leading to more inclusive, effective and sustainable development practices and a more equitable economy for all.

For a list of programs included in this reporting cycle, please see [Appendix 1: Programs delivered, page 27](#).



# 2.0 Project Overview

## Outstanding by standing together

*“Everybody had a common understanding of what we hoped to do because we were shaping that together. We had a lot of trust from everyone because we co-created our vision together.”*

– Sarah Beyea, WOSEN Project Manager

The WOSEN initiative aims to reimagine the social enterprise ecosystem — who it serves and how it functions — with a focus on addressing systemic barriers to create a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem across Ontario that supports the development and growth of women-owned and women-led<sup>2</sup> ventures that have a positive social and environmental impact. It aims to build a prosperous and resilient economy for all in Ontario. WOSEN is dedicated to equity and inclusion, and seeks to support entrepreneurs from underserved and underrepresented communities, including those who are Indigenous, in rural or remote regions, racialized, immigrants or refugees, 2SLGBTBQ+, or those with disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> Women includes ALL women

This section provides an overview of the collaborative’s positioning: the project’s Theory of Change and Developmental Evaluation frameworks through which WOSEN intends to meet its goal of unleashing the entrepreneurial energy and capacity of women who have solutions that put people and the planet first, enabling these entrepreneurs to build skills that match their potential to flourish.

The WOSEN collaborative may be considered a sector focused collective impact model (Kania and Kramer, 2011) targeting the women’s entrepreneurial ecosystem. While not engaging all community sectors, it is composed of five diverse organizations with a common mandate of social innovation: specifically, supporting and strengthening organizations and businesses that put people and planet first. Pillar supports and strengthens individuals, organizations and enterprises invested in positive community impact; CSI supports a platform to grow a community of social innovators; SVX is a diversified financial services firm that drives impact for investors, organizations, funds and enterprises; L4F focuses on business model innovation to support enterprises that generate tri-impact of financial, social and environmental value for all shareholders; and, NORDIK is a development and research hub dedicated to holistic community development. Its Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship (SEE) initiative aims to address social and economic challenges through supporting the development of the social enterprise ecosystem.

## 2.1 Evaluation frameworks

The WOSEN collaborative has a common agenda and shared measurement tools, undertakes mutually reinforcing activities, and has established continuous communication and feedback flows. As the administrative project lead, Pillar functions as the backbone organization.

The partnering organizations have extensive experience in leading social innovation, thus an integral aspect of the project is the commitment “to do things differently” in the design and delivery of a suite of programs, the creation of knowledge products, and operationally.

The work is grounded in working collectively and intentionally to create an **‘ecosystem of trust’** that fosters and supports respectful relationships among the collaborative, founders, business supporters and community partners, thereby creating the pathways, the linkages, the relationships and networks that support systemic change toward more equitable, inclusive people and places. Project-wide monthly meetings, weekly and bi-weekly program meetings and program methodology (including outreach, engagement and evaluation), all consider and allot time for nurturing and creating safe and brave spaces for dialogue, story sharing and feedback loops in order to centre and surface:

- i. the founders: where they are at; what they are experiencing; what they need in order to feel successful; and processes for meeting their goals; and,
- ii. practitioners: what they are learning, unlearning and experiencing and the support they need to undertake this work.

Exploring shared language, diverse perspectives, and new ways of understanding, practicing, and organizing underpin change and adaptation. This deep inner work of reflection and dialogue enables ongoing adoption and evolution of:

1. Principle-focused approaches;
2. Collaboration and co-creation; and,
3. Professional development

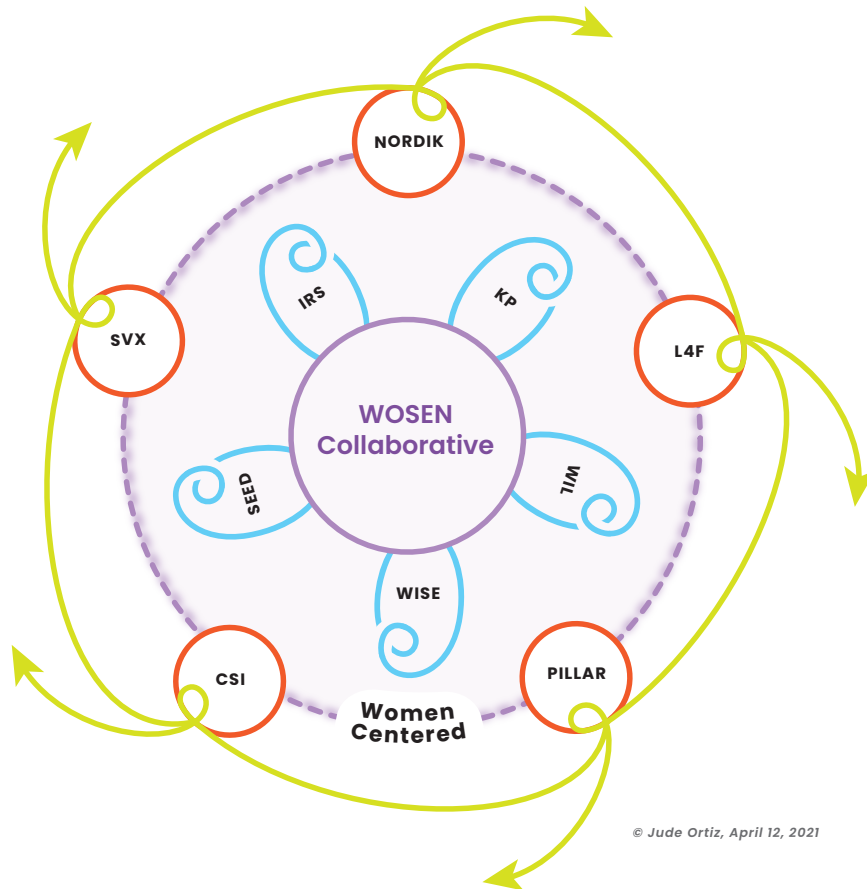
While the project is respectfully bound to the funder’s deliverables (i.e., programs, key performance indicators, timelines) the collaborative perceives the work within the broader context of social innovation. As such, it lives within a dynamic, interdependent, multivariable, constantly changing context where there are less defined pathways to achieving its goals, thus necessitating exploring processes, learnings and impacts to understand the context and conditions that support activities that create the desired change (e.g., how and why it happened), which activities might further strengthen the movement, and what is emerging that should be considered.

The partnering organizations have identified the outcomes that they want to see, i.e., a more equitable and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem, and based on past experience, organizational knowledge and literature have charted pathways toward the end goal. Regardless of how well thought out in advance, plans may need to adapt to circumstances as the project unfolds. Critical is the relationship between timely assessment of actions (learnings and impact in meeting goals) and strategic decision-making processes in guiding the initiative forward. Thus, two intertwined evaluation frameworks that link strategy to evaluation were adopted: Theory of Change and Developmental Evaluation. Both support incorporating evolving knowledge generation, thereby enabling continuous learning and adaptation to effect change in effective and meaningful ways.



## 2.2 WOSEN's Theory of Change

Figure 1: WOSEN Theory of Change



- WOSEN Collaborative
- 4 Programs WISE, WIL, SEED and Investment Readiness Supports – and Knowledge Products
- - - Women Centered
- Collaborative Organizations
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Questions that guided the creation of WOSEN Theory of Change include: What are we doing? For whom? Why is this important? And, what are the outcomes we want to achieve?

***The WOSEN collaborative's principles-focused approach to the development of a women's entrepreneurship ecosystem will support the growth of the spectrum of underrepresented women who are building enterprises that have a social and ecological impact core to their business offerings in urban, rural and remote regions in the province of Ontario.***

***Integrating a developmental evaluation approach to address four key ecosystem gaps will foster a continuous learning, a knowledge sharing and co-creation environment that will drive systems level change, situating women as central to economies that are connected to the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#), specifically #5: Gender Equity and #8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (Nov 15.19).***

Four key ecosystem gaps are addressed through four innovative programs: Women in Social Enterprise (WISE); Women-Centred Innovative Learning (WIL); Social Enterprise Ecosystem Development; (SEED) and Investment Readiness Supports (IRS), and the creation of knowledge products (KP) to build practitioner capacity. They are described in the [Programs section, page 8](#).

The learnings are incorporated into each partnering organization and further mobilized through the ecosystem.

## 2.3 Developmental evaluation

A Developmental Evaluation (DE) approach is embedded into the WOSEN project to instill a culture of reflection, assessment and adaptive design and implementation. NORDIK has led the DE process, collaboratively establishing ten key evaluation questions. See [Appendix 2: DE questions, page 30](#). Some target deliverables identified in the Contribution Agreement, while others are intended to reveal aspects of what the partners consider important to supporting a women entrepreneurial ecosystem as well influencing broader systemic change. They reveal who the project engaged; program development and evolution; the role of reflective practice; what resources and knowledge products were developed and mobilized; what was learned; what the collaborative needs to do moving forward; and what relationships would support such actions.

### ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

WOSEN's overarching assessment framework aims to identify changes in participant capacity for adaptation in transitioning to more equitable, inclusive and sustainable economies by capturing changes in:

**Knowledge**  
(skills and capacities;  
e.g., market research;  
problem solving)



**Behaviors**  
(what you would  
do differently)



**Attitudes and beliefs**  
(perceptions and  
understandings of  
self and others; e.g.,  
confidence;)



**Relationships  
and networks**  
(new connections;  
access to resources)



### DATA COLLECTION

A project-wide data collection process and sharing platform (Airtable) was implemented over the duration of this reporting cycle. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through a variety of methods that engaged participants and practitioners. The diversity of feedback loops in real time greatly contributed to the richness of the data collected.

Collection tools included intake forms; feedback forms during program delivery and/or end of programming; program delivery team discussions; project-wide dialogues; individual episodic reflection questions as part of the DE; and written reports.

## 2.4 Programs

### PROGRAM DESIGN

Programs aimed to create a safe and brave environment that would support surfacing different conversations to spur self learning, individual developmental shifts and relationship building that ground healthy, resilient entrepreneurs. They were intentionally co-created and input-focused (rather than solely output-focused) centering the lived experience and knowledge of participants and other entrepreneurship stakeholders (i.e., founders, practitioners, business supporters, community partners). Through iterative design and delivery cycles, the collaborative is responding to emerging understanding of how to serve this demographic, their evolving needs, as well as the changing dynamics of the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Intentional co-creation involved:

1. Conducting discovery (ethnographic) research by gathering stories, experiences and insights directly from entrepreneurs, potential entrepreneurs and other entrepreneurship stakeholders.
2. Recognizing and respecting existing relationships between entrepreneurs and business development supporters, investors/funders and their offerings;
3. Articulating what entrepreneurial supports need to be built, strengthened, redesigned, or reconfigured to create inclusive economies and just societies utilizing a social enterprise model; and,
4. Developing pathways to create and deliver such.

Each program was led by one of the collaborating organizations, with co-creators responsible for the innovative design, development, evolution, and program evaluation. Each program determined its weekly or bi-weekly meeting schedule of WOSSEN collaborators, plus the frequency of smaller team meetings to further monitor or manage the delivery, or concentrate on program design and developmental evaluation.

A fundamental element common to the four core programs (regardless of which ecosystem gap they address) is **the necessity of understanding the entrepreneurial context** — stakeholders' current knowledge, attitudes and beliefs, behaviours, and relationships and networks — in service of re/designing supports to be more inclusive, equitable and sustainable, enabling new ways of thinking, connecting, and thriving.

**Two overarching questions** underpinning WOSSEN's intentional program design revolved around:

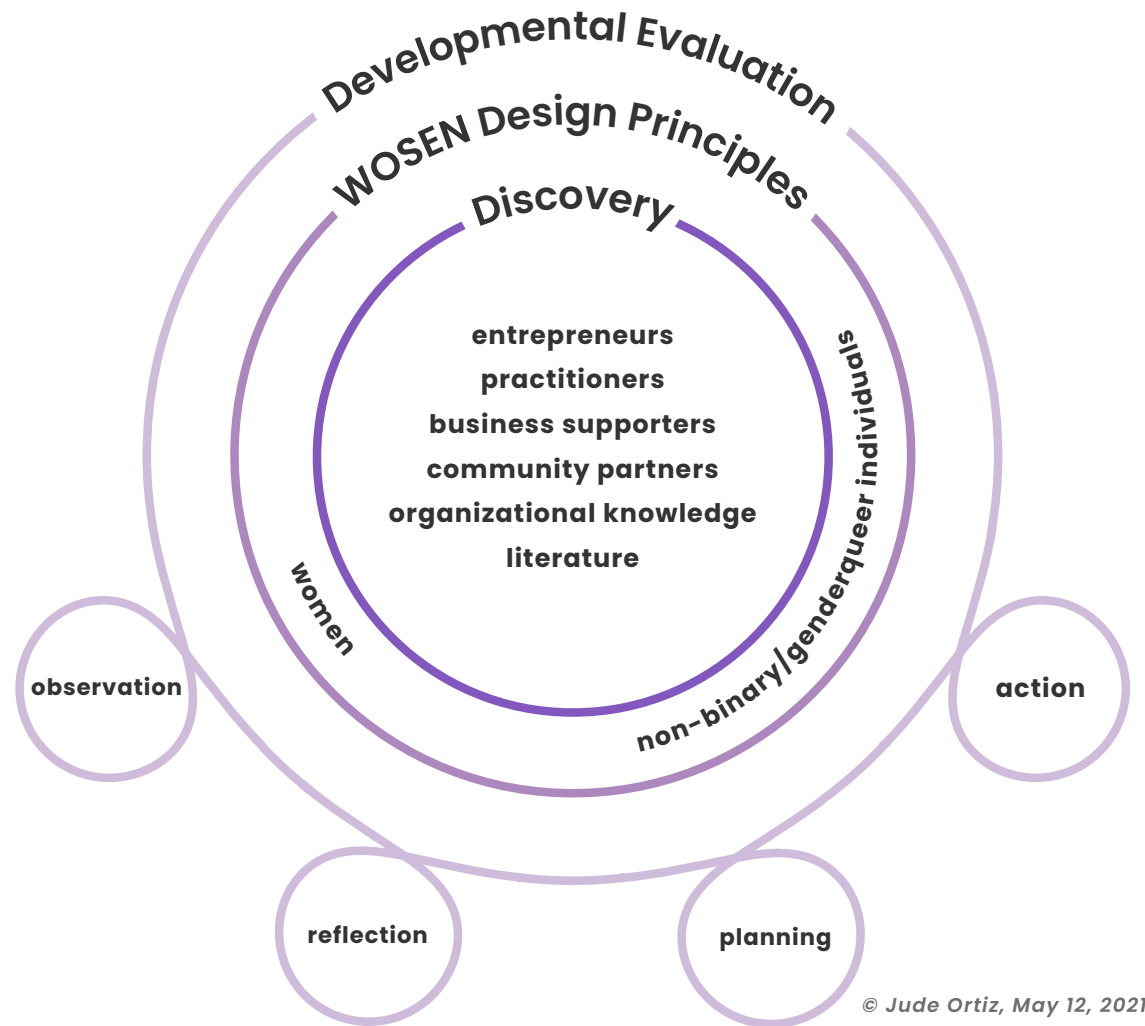
- How can women-focused support advance the entrepreneurs' endeavours?
- How can service providers support women-focused entrepreneurs based on their current context and needs?



Discovery lays the foundation, WOSEN Design Principles shape the structure and developmental evaluation assesses the learnings and impact, which is nested in the transformational cycle of observation, reflection, planning and action. The redesign iteration or evolution occurred in real time during delivery or at the end in preparation for the next delivery cycle.

Ethnographic research was conducted to gain insight and knowledge from:

- Stakeholders: women and business supports;
- Organizational knowledge;
- Community partners' understanding; and
- Literature



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## WOSEN DESIGN PRINCIPLES



The **WOSEN Design Principles (WDP)** have become the project's guiding principles influencing shared language, planning, implementation and evaluation. The seven principles emerged from the first Accelerator Design Jam (Jan 2020) led by L4F.

A description of each Wosen Design Principle and ways they were incorporated into the programming appears in [WOSEN Design Principles and application, page 17](#). Please also see [What knowledge products and resources were developed?, page 22](#) for information regarding two products based on the Design Principles.

# 3.0 Evaluation

## 3.1 Purpose of the evaluation

This interim evaluation is grounded in accountability, assessing the intervention's progress in meeting its stated goals and objectives. It is reviewed in terms of key performance indicators, and changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and relationship/networks that underpin the capacity to innovate and adapt at the individual, organizational and systems level. The WOSSEN initiative is being assessed at both the program and project level to identify the relationships between the two levels, and linkages between WOSSEN and the broader ecosystem it intends to influence.

Data for the evaluation was gathered from a variety of collection tools. Administrative reports provided data related to the deliverables and other areas where quantitative data is included. Feedback from program participants, coaches, guest facilitators and partners was gathered at the end of the session and analyzed during the program's iterative review process and then organized into a Program Summative Review that each program lead presented during a series of monthly partner meetings.

The participant *End of Program* survey itemized the impact of participating in WOSSEN. Practitioners provided data regarding their learnings through monthly partner meetings, episodic reflections and a Practitioner Reflection survey. Additionally, a *Practitioner Satisfaction Rating and Recommendations* survey was distributed to WOSSEN practitioners.

### LIMITATIONS

There are limitations to the study, with the most significant being linked to issues around human resources, delaying the implementation of a project-wide data collection process. This large-scale project, understandably, needed to focus its energy on program design and development first with the intent of incorporating the developmental evaluation aspect into each program as they evolved. As a result, not every program delivered during this reporting cycle is included in the evaluation. A table of [Programs Delivered \(Appendix 1, page 27\)](#) illustrates the number and type of programs, and whether it was a province-wide or a regional delivery.



## 3.2 Engagement

WOSEN delivered **34 regional and provincial programs** within this reporting cycle with **24 evaluated in this report**. See [Appendix 1: Programs delivered, page 27](#).

As a provincial initiative, WOSEN aims to engage participants from urban and rural communities in all regions. **719 program participants from 120 communities** from Kenora in the northwest to communities near the St. Lawrence River in the east were well represented. See [Appendix 3: Location of participants, page 32](#).

**27% of the total number of participants attended multiple programs** indicating WOSEN is making progress in providing a suite of programs that support participant needs at different entrepreneurial stages and/or practices.

**Stage of entrepreneurial journey:** 248 early stage enterprises (starting a business or less than 3 years in operation) and 121 resilience/growth enterprises (operational for 3 years or more).

Over the duration of the project, WOSEN's internal goal aims to have **at least 70%** of its program participants be from the **underrepresented groups**. WOSEN has exceeded its goal, **engaging 97% of the target demographic** in its programs.

The collaborative has **exceeded its key project impact goals at its midpoint** in every area where it has delivered programming, ranging from **1,378%** in supporting new women in starting a business; **201%** in connecting, networking and matchmaking or mentorship opportunities; 167% in strengthening entrepreneurial skills; **105%** in supporting women in growing an existing business to **101%** in engaging women in traditionally underrepresented sectors.

**Unlocking capital:** The project has a deliverable goal of unlocking 3.6 million in capital for WOSEN participants. While a few of the WIL programs support financial literacy and management, and a number of WISE participants are accessing investment on their own accord, the IRS programs are considered to be the primary means of realizing this target. How much has WOSEN unlocked for its participants?

Of the 25 founders responding to the IRS survey conducted in the spring of 2020:

- 15 founders secured funding
- \$950,000 secured in investments, grants or loans
- Founders applied for \$2.8M
- Founders are seeking \$27M in capital

**Ecosystem contribution** – WOSEN collaborated with a diversity of people in the entrepreneurship sphere to design, develop and/or deliver programming.

## 3.3 Learnings and impact

This section evaluates the learnings and impact WOSEN has had on program participants and practitioners, and identifies what other supports they would like.

### 3.3.1 What was WOSEN's impact on participants?

Data gathered through the Participant End of Program Evaluation survey provides the foundation for assessing the impact of delivering four women-centred programs on entrepreneurial ecosystem gaps from a variety of perspectives that underpin individual and societal transformation. The evaluation inquired about participant overall satisfaction with the program; if they were engaged in a meaningful way; changes in their knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and relationship/networks as a result of participation; and further support they are seeking.

Overall, the participants indicated that they increased knowledge in the targeted program areas, left the program with more positive attitudes and behaviours and expanded relationships and networks, all of which shall advantage them in their endeavours.

*"I entered the START program with what I believed was a minuscule idea to serve my communities. I leave the START program understanding how the impact I seek to make intersects with numerous factors - my business plan, my market research, the stakeholders I engage with, and who I am. Surrounded by incredibly supportive and like-minded women entrepreneurs, I leave START confident in my abilities to mould a sustainable social enterprise that best serves my communities." (Start Participant)*

*"A lot of the content delivered I was able to deeply reflect on and apply to my personal and professional life. Further, I got to engage with like-minded women entrepreneurs who helped me grow my ideas just through conversation and feedback." (Start Participant)*

*"It meant a great deal being able to speak with another woman that has experienced and continues to go through the struggles of running and growing a successful small business." (Extended Coaching Program Participant)*

*"Through the WOSEN program and my mentor, I met one of my main advisors, and I now have two contacts who have agreed to participate in my pre-seed investment. Although I still need to raise more funds to close my target of \$250K, this is the start I really needed. I am very grateful for the support you have both provided and for the support of the CSI community." (Investment Readiness Support Participant)*

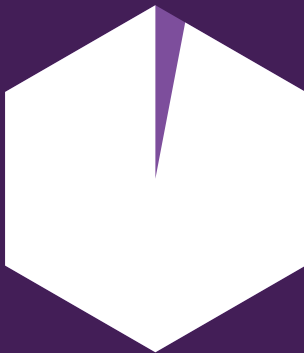
*"I think as far as the limitations that all programs have on behaviour change WOSEN has done a good job at supporting participants to improve or change some of their behaviours that could better support their businesses. These are challenging times overall for most entrepreneurs and so what can programs really ultimately shift and what should be deemed to be a good measure of success? I do believe that WOSEN has made an impact on behaviour." (WOSEN Practitioner)*

Overall satisfaction with programs:  
**Net Promoter Score**

68

Programs enabled meaningful participation:

Yes:  
97%



**Changes in knowledge:**

identified a range of areas where specific knowledge had been gained in each program and indicated they wanted further, deeper and/or longer support.



**Changes in attitudes (top three):**

felt more energized



felt more confident



increased desire to make the world a better place



**Changes in behaviours (top three):**

more curious in exploring solutions



more self-motivated



more able to take initiative



**Changes in relationships and networks (top three):**

would feel comfortable reaching out to presenters, coaches, etc.



comfortable reaching out to other participants



I do not feel that I made connections



### 3.3.2 What was WOSEN's impact on practitioners and further supports requested?

Collaborating partners' WOSEN practitioner learnings may be framed in terms of systems change – understanding that change begins with oneself, the inner journey – and presents itself as knowledge gained, and attitudinal shifts that impact behaviour (actions) and support relationship building and network development. Change is not linear, but rather dynamic, with one adaptation influencing other capacities that may lead to personal and community transformation of varying degrees and scale. Learning is personal and internal: processing takes time and the ability to articulate it can be challenging. As such, assessing the impact of practitioner engagement as a separate category is difficult as it is woven into all aspects of the initiative.

Based on practitioners' reflections, the collaborative considers that there has been significant learning around the project's goals: disrupting the entrepreneurial ecosystem by redesigning business supports for underrepresented and underserved women founders, enabling them to build capacity and flourish while simultaneously influencing stakeholder engagement toward more inclusive equitable practices.

Overall, the practitioners have centred foundational community development approaches – meeting people (participants, practitioners and ecosystem stakeholders) where they are at and responding to emerging circumstances. Thus, project and program design and development has followed the transformational cycle of observation, reflection, planning and action underpinned by a Developmental Evaluation lens. One practitioner aptly described it as *"Programs shift - they gather, assimilate, respond, and repeat."*

#### **Impact of engagement:**

*"Being given the space where it is actively encouraged to think critically and practically about systems transformation has been an incredibly powerful thing... To have the space to really test out massive change also allows the opportunity to see where smaller changes with substantial impact can be implemented in a wider range of programming. I feel confident in saying that my participation in WOSEN programming, and the relationships built with the other partners, the participants, and the communities/people we engage with has helped me grow to be a better person, and a better support in the entrepreneurial ecosystem."*

*"I have experienced growth in my capacity to be present with others, to see different perspectives. Much of my work has invited me to slow down and let go of urgency to some degree, which has supported being more present. The flip side of that is that scope hasn't necessarily changed nor have deadlines, so realizing the importance of also re-evaluating what actually needs to get done and when."*

#### **The role of reflective practice:**

*"A reflective practice is an excellent way to be responsive to emerging needs, to assess approaches and to better understand myself and my team in our collaborative work. This approach integrates evaluation into the day to day of our applied work together."*

*"Understanding self: reflective practice (RP) helps me remember my intentions around what I was designing and how I wanted to show up in delivery. It also gives me a better reminder of how I felt during design and delivery, which is an important factor for me. Social Innovation: I think reflective practice is really helpful over time. It can be difficult to get the momentum and sometimes evaluations can feel like a chore, however, once it has built up over time and you can start to see your progress, you can also be more mindful of the impact you're having."*

The data in this section is organized around WOSEN's three identified intertwined areas of adaptation and evolution gained through deep inner work of reflection and dialogue:

5. Principle-focused approaches
6. Collaboration and co-creation
7. Professional development

Within these three areas practitioners indicated engagement in the project resulted in increased knowledge; more attunement to attitudes and beliefs (theirs and others); new patterns of behaviours or actions that were more inclusive and equitable; and increased relationships and networks (deeper or newer) within the collaboration and the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem. Perhaps most importantly, they indicated a greater appreciation of, and capacity for, reflective practice; its integral role in advancing system change through novel, responsive programming; intentional relationship building; and respectful action.

**WOSEN Design Principles** were developed collaboratively, requiring extensive and intensive reflection providing deep professional development opportunities. Lean4Flourishing led the development of the seven principles as part of the three-day WISE Design Jam (Jan 2020). The principles were created to intentionally redirect the focus of entrepreneurship support programs toward the women the project intends to serve. See [WOSEN Design Principles and application, page 17](#).

**Collaboration and Co-creation:** Each aspect of the project was a collaboration, with many components being co-created, carving space for practitioners to contribute in areas where they were strong and increase their capacity in others.

**Professional development:** 3 key areas of growth: Knowledge Product development; Developmental Evaluation and relationship building and network development.

**Further supports requested:** anti-racist/decolonised program delivery and facilitation training; language learning; trauma-informed communication and facilitation for various accessibility formats.



# WOSEN Design Principles and application





## 1. Inclusive & Accessible

Do the work required to know your participants. Listen to understand and work to foster an environment of shared meaning and trust, where all participants can feel they belong and have equitable access to opportunities and resources.

The WOSSEN Design Principles were developed collaboratively, requiring extensive and intensive reflection providing deep professional development opportunities. L4F led the development of the seven principles as part of the three-day WISE Design Jam (January, 2020). They emerged from sound inquiry around practitioners' orthodoxies (assumptions each person brings with them), ethnographic research and by applying methodologies to surface the positionality of traditional programmes and programme supports (individuals and logistical). The principles were created to intentionally redirect the focus of general entrepreneurship support programs toward the specific entrepreneurs the project intends to serve. Understanding of the principles has continued to evolve through intentional reflection and continued dialogue. The Start program significantly contributed to their development, incorporating them as the basis of program design and implementation, with the broader WOSSEN project adopting them quickly thereafter. Practitioners have continued to deepen their understanding of their meaning, personally, and how to live by them in service of the project.

Following are the seven WOSSEN Design Principles and examples of how practitioners have incorporated them into their program design and delivery. Two knowledge products based on the WOSSEN Design Principles are in development.

- a. Ensure all individuals are heard, valued and treated with respect by providing programming that considers lived experience, learning needs, and any physical and cultural barriers to inclusion.
- b. Invite participants to bring their whole selves, acknowledging multi-dimensional identities.
- c. Consider who is in the program and ensure that the content meets the needs of the participants. For example, summarise regularly, providing another chance for the flow of the discussion to be understood; use visual and auditory supports as often as possible while avoiding information overload; and consider what role hearing, sight and mobility might play in activities and spaces.
- d. Take stock of your own positionality and power before each session and consider how it may bias your perspective. Examine the language you use - is it inclusive & accessible, easy to understand and without too much jargon?
- e. Provide opportunities and invite participants to share their positionalities and power with the group, tailoring activities to enable them to leverage their power.

*"With Northern Ontario being such a large geographic area, virtual sessions and virtual coaching made the program more accessible. Using user-friendly language without 'buzzwords' also contributed to accessibility"*  
(Elizabeth MacMillan, NORDIK)



## 2. Decolonized

WOSEN acknowledges that we find ourselves in a colonized system that has oppressed and systemically devalued Indigenous ways, voices, and lives. It aims to create space for multiple realities in programming so that we can build relationships and engage in collective wisdom and knowledge sharing together. Decolonized de-centers where knowledge is held and rethinks how knowledge can be formed.

- a. *Decolonized* acknowledges the kinds of enterprises we are talking about are not “new” (social enterprises or community-driven businesses), rather Indigenous peoples have been doing this work for centuries. Similarly, innovation does not only refer to technological innovation, but also old knowledge and principles which seek to be made new again through any form of solution development.
- b. Invite and value other ways of knowing,
- c. Speak to colonization, e.g., How might colonization be responsible for this state of affairs or perspective?
- d. Give credit if using aspects of another’s culture and use in harmony with that culture’s intention.
- e. Normalize that it is ok for anyone to speak up about present or historical harm or discomfort, and build community muscles of treating this feedback as a gift rather than meeting it with pushback and silencing.

## 3. Anti-Oppressive

Anti-oppressive practice seeks to recognize the oppressions that exist in society and attempt to mitigate their effects and eventually equalize the power imbalance in our communities. Practicing anti-oppression work in real terms is not only confronting individual examples of bigotry, or confronting societal examples, it is also confronting ourselves and our own roles of power and oppression in our communities and the bigger picture.

- a. Consider co-creating a community agreement and guidelines so you have transparent protocols in place.
- b. Explore your patterns of flight, fight, freeze, appease when it comes to feedback and confrontation. Build the muscles of being able to respond to feedback rather than reacting and shutting it down so that you can model taking corrective feedback from people experiencing oppression.
- c. Balance between holding someone accountable for an offensive or ignorant statement and still engaging them in the conversation. If you have the emotional bandwidth, use it as a teachable moment to allow further entry into the conversation.
- d. When discomfort, harm or other issues arise, ask the group for suggestions on how to deal with these situations in the future.
- e. Normalize at the start of a group’s time together the difference between intention and impact and ask people to commit to taking responsibility for impact.



#### 4. Systems-Informed

WOSEN aims to integrate systems thinking, taking the time to step back and examine the larger cultural and historical contexts in which we find ourselves. We believe that through understanding systems we can enable ourselves to change them by unpacking systemic barriers, e.g., being aware, actively informed and inviting global conversations and differing perspectives. Systems-informed means to work to acknowledge and understand the links between elements that make up a system, including your place within the system. While discussion is invited, it is not a place for political lobbying but for empathizing, learning, and growing.

- a. Zoom out: take a step back from a conversation and see the larger context in which an issue is taking place.
- b. Leverage the diverse lived-experiences of the group.
- c. Use activities that invite the participants to hear and see each other's work.
- d. Notice when people use either/or and try to simplify complex issues, slow it down and encourage people to do a deeper analysis.
- e. When faced with an urgent decision, take a break to think creatively and avoid making decisions under extreme pressure.

#### 5. Responsive

WOSEN acknowledges unique cultural attributes and elements, creating space for participants to request culturally appropriate support they need. Responsive practice means centering the needs and identities of the participant and changing directions as needed to move in the direction that they need.

- a. While being present for others, you practice self-care to ensure that WOSEN may continue to provide the same quality of support over time and to protect yourself from giving more than is in your cup to give.
- b. In being responsive, you create opportunities to calm, stretch and carve space for empathy and empathizing individually and together. You aim to understand the emotional needs of women entrepreneurs and pace learning at the speed of trust.
- c. Avoid responding to someone who is triggered as a problem within your session. A triggered person is letting you know they don't feel safe. Interpret them as asking for help and connection. Say "It's ok to feel afraid, but you're not in any danger. You're here with me right now."
- d. Stay nimble and know your go-to moves - Being present and mindful of go-to moves when encountering specific situations, moving slowly, and creating space for silence can all help a facilitator to determine the best course of action in any given moment.
- e. Work for balance between process and content, but give precedence to process over content when you have to choose.

*"The team designed sessions as we went through the program to stay flexible to the needs of the group." (Maureen Strickland, NORDIK)*



## 6. Ecosystem-Approach

WOSEN does not plug into patriarchal systems or adopt patriarchal norms such as being overly competitive and exclusive. An ecosystem-approach showcases the value of partnership and collaboration, helping entrepreneurs learn how to partner well, and be active personal and systems mappers and designers. Collaborators are invited into WOSSEN networks and practice inclusion for the purpose of collective impact as well as for the purpose of social justice.

- a. Foster the idea that success is shared.
- b. Promote give and take: The ecosystem-approach invites us to share success, raise our collaborators and allies up, but it also invites us to ask for what we need. Asking for help or support is not perceived as weakness or as “begging”. Give and take are equal activities in the eyes of the ecosystem.
- c. Plan for moments of teamwork and cooperative activities considering how the participants within the session may be able to help one another.
- d. Create a culture where people can bring problems to the group to solve, not just to report activities.
- e. Invite participants to connect with one another on social media and other platforms or in other places where they may be able to see each other’s networks, make introductions, and support each other.

## 7. Human-Centred

Historically, and in the context of the patriarchal economic systems, women have not always had the space to leverage their capacities, values, or ways of working. WOSSEN practices human-centeredness to create these missing opportunities to calm, stretch and carve space for empathy and being as we are. Understanding the emotional needs of women entrepreneurs and not treating emotions as misplaced in the context of work or innovation is crucial.

- a. Pace learning at the speed of trust and do not force strategies, opinions, or the best practices of the patriarchy on one another. Instead, favor being trauma informed and building authentic relationships with one another. WOSSEN programs are not “therapy sessions” places where social, societal or institutional forms of harm or oppression can take place. That said, do not accept non-feasible ideas no matter how comforting they may be. WOSSEN programs aim to enable participants’ real progress and action.
- b. Make room for women’s ways of being and doing - invite everyone to come as they are and protect the shared spaces from assumptions about how one “can” or “should” do business, advocacy work, or social innovation based on societal norms.
- c. Create a safe space for expression - enable participants to both heal and thrive by creating a space to share their experiences and challenges but also their values, hopes, and dreams for the future.
- d. Get in the mindset of speaking for and on behalf of yourself and only yourself.
- e. Follow up with participants and continue the relationship.

*“By integrating the Design Principles such as Human-Centered and Responsive, we feel we developed a deeper connection with the entrepreneurs.” (SVX)*

## 3.4 Building awareness and ecosystem capacity

### 3.4.1 What knowledge products and resources were developed?

*"Knowledge products are transactional. Knowledge relationships are transformational."* (André Vashist, Pillar)

Knowledge products are intended to increase understanding of ways to foster respectful relationships and deepen contextual knowledge when engaging with people who are underrepresented in business. They aim to build capacity to support the development of equitable and inclusive people and communities, creating space so all may participate in business, life, and society at large.

WOSSEN's products are intended to influence: i) practitioners within and beyond the WOSSEN collaborative; ii) and the support side of the ecosystem, e.g., business support, funding agencies, investors; researchers and policy makers.

#### **KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS:**

- In development: Two materials based on WOSSEN Design Principles: *Facilitator's Guide and Workbook for Accelerator Programs* and *Pollinating Change: Designing Principles for a Better World* (Working title)
- Completed: [Place-based Impact Investing Report](#) and [Social Venture Financial Plan](#)

### 3.4.2 How was WOSSEN's learnings and impact mobilized?

The primary distribution channels have been:

- WOSSEN generated: blogs and social media, press releases
- Earned media hits: regional, provincial, national, international; radio and television

### 3.4.3 What professional development opportunities were there?

A number of professional development instances were for individual WOSSEN staff, others were collaborative-wide. Some aimed to influence the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem while a few were targeted to a combination of stakeholders. A few of the opportunities were: Certification in OCAP Principles; attending the Social Enterprise World Forum; StrikUP!; Knowledge Product Development; and Gender-Smart Entrepreneurship Education & Training Plus (GEET+) Consultations assessing gender inclusivity tools.

As a dynamic collaborative with many partners and external relationships, learnings gained through professional development wove their way through the ecosystem, informing others while simultaneously being informed through processes of storytelling, deep listening, and responding.

## 3.5 Moving Forward

This section contains insights around program development innovation and evolution. Project development considerations, however, are outstanding as the collaborative is transitioning to a new DE lead.

### 3.5.1 Program development, innovation and evolution

*How have the programs developed and what has the collaborative learned in this cycle?*

WOSEN's innovative programs aim to create a safe and brave environment that would support surfacing different conversations to spur self-learning, individual developmental shifts and transformational relationship building that ground healthy, resilient entrepreneurs. They are intentionally co-created, input-focused (rather than solely output-focused) centering the lived experience and knowledge of participants and other entrepreneurship stakeholders (i.e., founders, practitioners, business supporters, community partners) and responsive to emerging circumstances.

Summative Program Reports providing the collaborative space to share and dialogue around their learnings, impact, and arising questions were presented by program, Pillar, CSI, SVX and L4F, leads during a succession of monthly partner meetings. Each was responsible for specific program deliveries and associated logistics including marketing and communication strategies and the methodology, i.e., discovery to inform its design; identifying which, if any, community partners, (e.g., co-facilitators, guest speakers) were to be engaged and their roles; evaluation and redesign evolution in response to emerging awareness, understanding, and changing needs. Evaluation was embedded into each program session as a formal feedback form or closing circle that informed reflection and iteration decisions either during the delivery or at the end of the program.

#### REFLECTION ON PROGRAM INNOVATION AND EVOLUTION

Overall, the two most frequent WOSEN Design Principles cited as a starting point for program design were 'responsive' followed by 'anti-oppressive.' Responsiveness is underpinned by deep listening, making sense of what is heard, and finding ways to quickly integrate such into the next engagement, to build trust and commitment in meeting participant needs within the scope of the project, or referring them elsewhere for further support. Anti-oppressive practice involves continually monitoring power dynamics and attempting to surface, acknowledge and mitigate their effects within the programs to create a safe and engaging space. For more details please see [WOSEN Design Principles and application, page 17](#).

#### Four key components of program innovation and evolution:

1. Ground the work in WOSEN Design Principles, an inclusive, anti-racist and decolonizing framework;
2. Adopt a developmental evaluation approach to support ongoing reflection and assessment informing co-creative responsive design and evolution;
3. Reduce the amount of facilitator delivered content, creating opportunities for more discussion, dialogue and relationship building between participants; and,
4. Tailor content to meet smaller group or more individualized needs.

The above four key components are applicable to social innovation, in general, as they support system change. As the project evolved, the ecosystem gaps became more clearly defined.



## 3.5.2 Project development

*What has the collaborative done in this cycle, what has it learned, and what does it need to do moving forward?*

*How does the WOSSEN collaborative aim to meet identified outstanding and future program and project needs, and ongoing or arising questions? What relationships need to be developed and/or strengthened to support this work?*

The collaborative is transitioning to a new DE lead who will engage the partners in a thorough investigation in determining pathways forward. The Interim Report, therefore, concludes with a summary of the WOSSEN practitioner Satisfaction Survey designed to reflect on the project's progress in meeting its goals.

### WOSSEN PRACTITIONER SATISFACTION RATINGS

In total, 14 WOSSEN practitioners were invited to complete the survey with 12 providing input, resulting in a response rate of 86%. On average, **17% of respondents were somewhat satisfied; 42% were satisfied and 41% were very satisfied.** The comments and recommendations WOSSEN practitioners provided will be taken forward and discussed in the near future.

While the collaborative has not yet completed a comprehensive Summative Review, they have identified key learnings that impact social innovation and evolution in this field.

### Four key social innovation and evolution learnings:

Key lessons from the WOSSEN experience will shape the future of the program, and may prove critical to the reorganization of the current entrepreneurial system to foster the growth of women-owned and women-led ventures with a positive social and environmental impact.

1. Establish a collaborative founded on trust and dedicated to collaboration and co-creation in addressing system change;
2. Ground the work in WOSSEN Design Principles, an inclusive, anti-racist and decolonizing framework;
3. Adopt a developmental evaluation approach to support ongoing reflection and assessment informing co-creative and responsive design;
4. Reduce the amount of facilitator delivered content, creating opportunities for more discussion, dialogue and relationship building between participants and tailor content to meet smaller group or more individualized needs.



# 4.0 Conclusions

The collaborative's foundation of trust and dedication to collaborating and co-creating the objectives, processes, programming and evaluation framework is seen as an innovative, effective and impactful approach to addressing system change. The common agenda and shared measurement tools, mutually reinforcing activities and avenues of continuous communication has contributed to developing and/or strengthening relationships and networks within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and thus, WOSSEN's success in reorganizing the way the current entrepreneurial system works to enable women to participate and prosper in business and society.

In sum, although the data collection tools and shared measurement platform was implemented, in some cases, well into the program delivery schedule, the Interim Report does amass a considerable amount of participant, ecosystem stakeholder and practitioner feedback and insights suggesting the methodology is working. There are areas that surfaced through the WOSSEN Practitioner Satisfaction Rating survey, program reflections and project dialogues where practitioners have requested more nuanced details that might, for example, be captured through pre/post survey questions, more discussion around ways to further support relationships and network building within the programs and how to assess the impact of knowledge projects and the mobilization of such in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The development of knowledge projects is well underway and their mobilization will be an area of focus in the next reporting cycle.

WOSSEN has met its programming deliverables during this reporting cycle, and in many cases exceeded the intended project engagement numbers mid-way through the initiative. Participants indicated they gained knowledge, experienced positive shifts in attitudes and behaviors and expanded relationships and networks, all of which will advantage them in their endeavours. WOSSEN practitioners indicated that a significant amount of deep learning and personal growth transpired during this reporting cycle around principle-focused approaches, co-creation processes and developmental evaluation that underpin the fostering and growth of women-owned and women-led ventures with a social positive and environmental impact. Practitioners also attribute knowledge product development processes to considerable professional development, and underscore the role and value of reflective practice in advancing this field. The initiative is well positioned for the upcoming Project Summative Review that will inform how the collaborative moves forward and what relationships need to be created or strengthened in support of this important work.

Social innovation affecting systems change and evaluating impact is a complex and long-term process whereas the WOSSEN project is limited to three-and-a-half years, and thus, herein lies one of the tensions. These considerations, as well as other participant and practitioner comments noted throughout in the report, will provide a strong foundation for framing the next cycle of Development Evaluation inquiry, reflection and evolution.

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# Appendix 1: Programs delivered

The following table lists the **34 regional and provincial programs delivered** in this reporting cycle and identifies the **24 evaluated in this report**. The Contribution Agreement specified the number of each type of program to be delivered within certain timeframes, and the collaborating partners determined which organization — Pillar, CSI, NORDIK or SVX — would take the lead in delivering them.

PROGRAM	REGIONAL	PROVINCIAL	INCLUDED IN EVALUATION
<b>WISE</b> (Women in Social Enterprise): Accelerator programs			
Start	6		5
Grow/Resilience	1	2	2
<b>WIL</b> (Women-Centred Innovation Learning): Responsive programming tailored to build competency and support networks			
<b>English</b>			
Indigenous Communities (London)	1		0
Media Equity		1	0
PowerStories™ - An African Centred Approach with Dobijoki Emanuela		1	1
Leading into the Future: Inspiring and Activating Community Social Innovation	3		3
Your Heart is your Genius		1	1
Financial Literacy		1	1
<b>French</b>			
Et si on se lançait dans l'entrepreneurial social?	1		0
Quand les femmes innovent et réussissent en affaires	1		0
Entrepreneuriat féminin		1	0
Salon des femmes entrepreneures sociales		1	0

PROGRAM	REGIONAL	PROVINCIAL	INCLUDED IN EVALUATION
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**SEED** (Social Enterprise Ecosystem Developers): A series of modules that allows for dialogue and self-reflection on how to respond to the needs of all social entrepreneurs with an anti-oppressive and systems-informed lens, and a Community of Practice provides for continued learning.

Social Enterprise Ecosystem Developers: Rebuilding Our Economy for Shared Prosperity	4		4
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**IRS** (Investment Readiness Support): Supports founders to prepare for a grant, loan or investment and facilitates their relationships with potential investors

Funding and Capital		2	2
Investment Readiness Supports		1	1
Funder Pair		1	1

**ECP** (Extended Coaching Program); One-on-one coaching for entrepreneurs at various stages of development

New entrepreneurs		1	1
Grow/Resilience		1	1
London Indigenous Start	1		0
French Entrepreneurs		1	0

**Digital Transformation:** Support for women to digitally transform their business through increased capacity around social media marketing, search engine optimization, e-commerce and other digital marketing categories.

Digital Transformation		1	1
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# Appendix 2:

## DE questions

## Evaluation questions

The following ten evaluation questions were developed collaboratively. Some of the questions target deliverables identified in the Contribution Agreement with FedDev Ontario, while others are intended to reveal aspects of what the partners consider important to supporting a women's entrepreneurial ecosystem as well influencing broader systemic change. A few of the questions include sub or clarifying questions that appear in italics below.

### Engagement:

1. Who did WOSSEN engage?
2. Which sectors are women entrepreneurs contributing to building healthy, resilient people and places?

### Learning and Impact:

3. What was WOSSEN's impact on program participants? (women, business developers, investors)
4. What did participants identify as ways to further develop a social entrepreneurial ecosystem supportive of women and non-binary/genderqueer people?
5. What was WOSSEN's impact on practitioners?

*How does reflective practice contribute to increased capacity for understanding oneself, appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures, and ways to affect social innovation?*

6. What did WOSSEN practitioners identify as ways to further develop their capacity to serve a social entrepreneurial ecosystem that supports women and non-binary/genderqueer people?

### Knowledge Creation and Mobilization:

7. What resources and knowledge products were developed?
8. How was WOSSEN's learnings and impact mobilized?
9. What professional development opportunities were there?

### Moving Forward

#### 10. Program and Project Development:

*How have the programs developed and what has the collaborative learned in this cycle?*

*What has the collaborative done in this cycle, what has it learned, and what does it need to do moving forward? How does the WOSSEN collaborative aim to meet identified outstanding and future program and project needs, and ongoing or arising questions? What relationships need to be developed and/or strengthened to support this work?*



# Appendix 3:

## Location of participants

## Location of participants

As a provincial initiative, WOSEN aims to engage participants from urban and rural communities in all regions. The map illustrates the **120 communities** where the **719 program participants** reside. In the northern region, the most western participants were from the Kenora area, followed by a few from Thunder Bay and the shore of Lake Superior. There was a cluster along Highway 11 and in Timmins, as well as Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury and Manitoulin Island. The southwestern region from Windsor eastward, to the central area around Toronto, to eastern Ontario including places surrounding Lake Ontario, and communities near the St. Lawrence River were well represented.

