

# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS and their Companies in South Africa

Date of survey: April 10, 2020



## ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

94%

of respondents are at least 51% owned, managed and controlled by one or more women

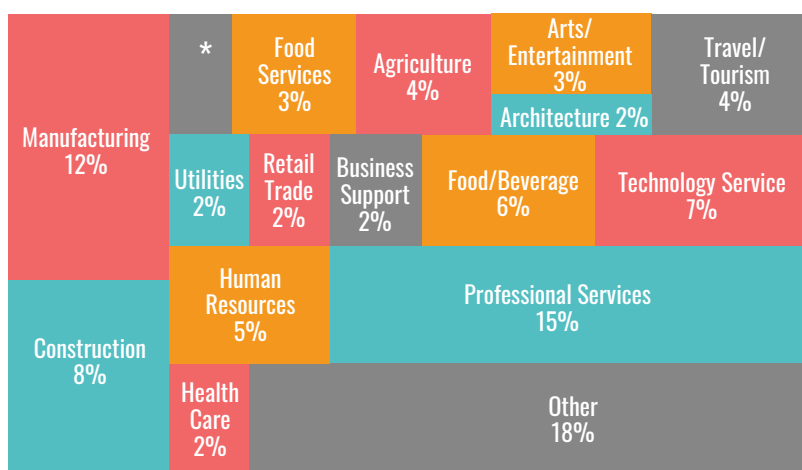


## BUSINESS LOCATION

Total number of respondents: 98

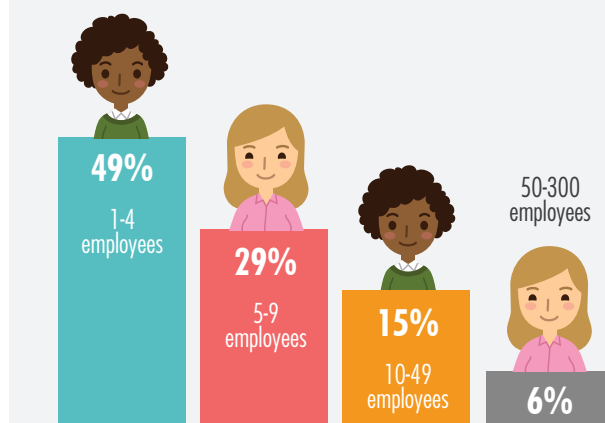


## INDUSTRY SECTOR



\* 1% each: Education and Wholesale Trade

## BUSINESS SIZE



## IMPACT ON BUSINESS FROM COVID-19 (January to March)

89%

of respondents have been impacted negatively by COVID-19

- 38% Losing customers as face-to-face business goes digital
- 37% Increased anxiety about the situation has reduced my productivity/time spent on business
- 35% Inability to source raw materials and inputs for my products due to supply chains disruptions
- 28% Employees can't work causing delays in meeting client needs
- 23% Increased care demands (children, elderly, other loved ones) have reduced the time I spend on my business
- 16% Need to shift to digital business and not sure where to start
- 14% Can't move inventory that is sitting idle due to decreased demand
- 8% Not sure where to go for advice and guidance
- 43% Other (i.e. Client and partner shutdowns lead to a trickle-down effect)

## IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES

43%

have seen a decrease in employee morale, while 4% have noted an increase in morale

35%

of respondents indicated their employees are unable to work remotely due to lack of technology and 23% due to lack of Internet access. This is higher than global average

32%

of respondents have had to decrease their employees' hours due to the decrease in their revenue

64%

of women business owners have used social media and 52% have used videoconferencing to accommodate the health and safety of their families and employees

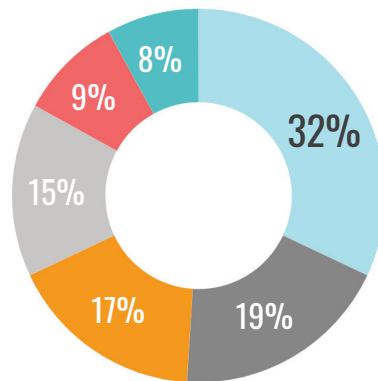


## IMPACT ON SALES OR REVENUE

87%

of women business owners have seen a significant decrease in sales or revenue from January - March 2020

Of those that saw a decrease in sales or revenue:

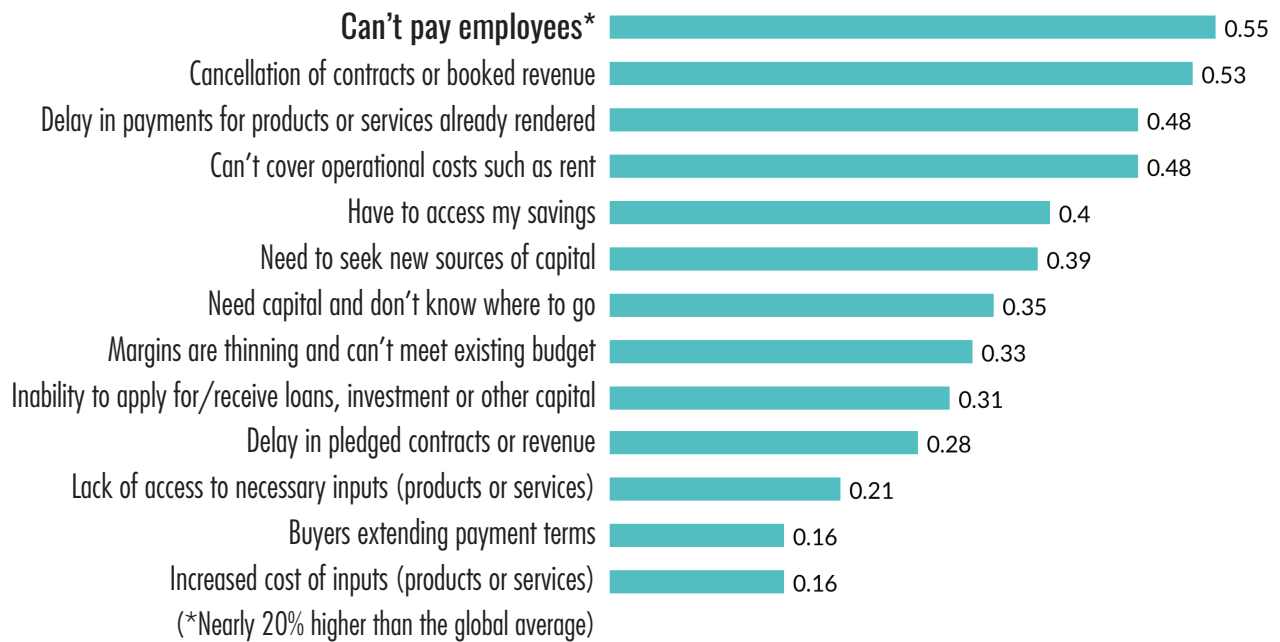


- My sales/revenue have stopped completely
- 51% - 70% decrease in sales/revenue
- 11% - 30% decrease in sales/revenue
- 71% - 99% decrease in sales/revenue
- 1% - 10% decrease in sales/revenue
- 31% - 50% decrease in sales/revenue

72%

anticipate decreased sales between April and July 2020. 49% of those anticipate decreases of more than half and 23% of those anticipate sales will stop completely

## NEW FINANCIAL CHALLENGES



## NEEDS BASED ON LEVEL OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN

1. Securing immediate funding to remain operational
2. Adjusting products or services to remain relevant in response to economic changes
3. Adjusting delivery of products or services at a time of social distancing
4. Funding for the organization to remain fiscally stable
5. Adjusting internal operations during social distancing
6. Directly responding to or supporting customers, suppliers and other critical business partners dealing with the crisis
7. Responding to immediate potential or actual health needs of employees

**71%**  
need tax relief through  
delayed or canceled  
payments

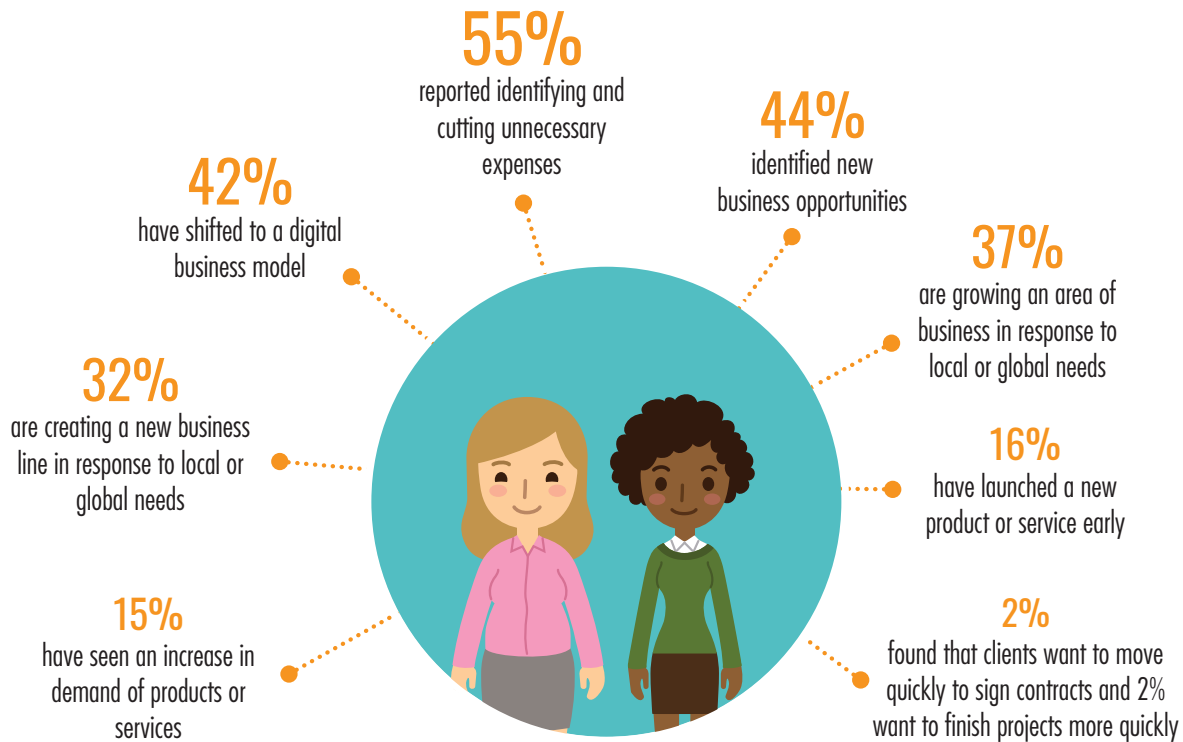
**63%**  
of respondents are  
in need of support  
with their employee  
wages

**42%**  
of respondents are in  
need of extensions  
of credit or penalty  
waivers from banks

**16%**  
are in need of  
government funded  
healthcare for COVID-19



# THE BRIGHT SIDE: Women are adapting to optimize or refocus their businesses



“If your retail business is totally shut down, investigate opportunities for trading online and using courier services for delivery. In a nutshell, leverage on platforms available to digitize your business offering during this period.”

“Take time to think... Listen carefully to the new world as it emerges. Remember that none of us have been here or got the T shirt. Don't beat yourself up if you are unsure. You will figure it out. Big problems always disguise big opportunities. Keep looking.”

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

How can WEConnect International and its member buyers support women-owned businesses in the next 1-3 months?

- 77% Increased contract opportunities
- 68% Increased business opportunities with other women-owned businesses
- 63% Increased access to finance
- 61% Increased networking opportunities with other women business owners
- 37% Increased mentorship
- 34% Increased access to investment
- 30% Increased business training
- 28% Increased training on COVID-19 survival strategies
- 25% Increased meet the member virtual events
- 23% Accelerate finalization of contracts with member buyers
- 18% Improve the terms of existing contracts with member buyers

WEConnect International intends to pursue a quarterly survey over the course of one year to understand the scope and nature of the impact of COVID-19 on women business owners and their companies worldwide. The results of the survey have been self-reported by women business owners within the WEConnect International network and partner organizations.