

COVID-19 Indigenous Business Survey

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Presented by the Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce



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The Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce reveals findings of their recent Indigenous Business Survey. The results highlight the unique impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous businesses, current barriers to accessing government relief programs, and capabilities of these businesses to supply PPE to the federal government.

Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Methodology.....	4
Demographics	7
Business Characteristics.....	9
Business Impacts.....	12
Business Impacts.....	13
Overall Impact.....	13
Gross Annual Revenues	15
Employment.....	17
Access to Government Programs.....	18
Access to Government Programs.....	19
Current Lending Relationships.....	20
Financial Assistance	21
Business Survival Rate.....	22
Barriers to Government Programming	24
Procurement Capabilities.....	27
Conclusion and Calls to Action.....	29
Conclusion.....	30
CALLS TO ACTION	31
Works Cited.....	33



Part 1

Executive Summary



Summary Report: The COVID-19 Indigenous Business Survey

Conducted by the Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Task Force

The COVID-19 virus was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020. Since then, provinces and territories, Indigenous communities, and municipalities across Canada have declared a state of emergency to implement safety measures and reduce the spread of the virus. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people, communities, and the economy has been unprecedented, with vulnerable and systemically disadvantaged groups experiencing increased negative impacts. Research and information sharing have and will continue to play a crucial role in developing effective policies and programming during the pandemic, recovery stage, and beyond.

To understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous businesses in Canada, the Indigenous Business Covid-19 Response Taskforce launched the Indigenous business survey in collaboration with CCAB. In general, there is a lack of data on Indigenous businesses in Canada, which has led to barriers in current and previous policies, programming, and other business supports. Additionally, further demographic data such as gender and identity are needed. During a global crisis, it is more important than ever to focus efforts on collecting quality data to assist with targeted recovery plans for distinctive economic groups. Indigenous businesses have a unique place in the Canadian economy and will require policies and strategies that meet their individual needs. The Indigenous Business Survey is a much-needed first step to understanding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous-owned businesses in Canada, capture current barriers to government programming, and gauge the willingness and capabilities of these businesses to supply Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to the federal government.

Methodology

The survey was developed with and distributed through social networks and membership databases of the following members of the Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce:

[Assembly of First Nations](#)

[Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business](#)

[Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers](#)

[Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada](#)

[Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#)

[National Aboriginal Capital Corporations Association](#)

[National Indigenous Economic Development Board](#)

[Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada](#)

The Indigenous Business Survey was available between April 29, 2020 and May 22, 2020, collecting a total of 838 responses in both French and English. The survey was distributed using an open engagement approach and Taskforce members promoted the survey online through their business networks.

Participation was voluntary and relied on a self-selection method where respondents could complete the survey fully or partially if desired. Due to the open and voluntary nature of the survey, the data is unweighted and should not be considered a representative sample based on the total Indigenous business population in Canada. The following report provides insight into the results of the *Indigenous Business Survey* from businesses across sectors, identity groups (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis), gender, location (on/off reserve, settlements, Inuit Nunangut), and business size (annual revenues, employee numbers).



Part 2

Demographics and Business Characteristics



Demographics

The majority of survey respondents represent Indigenous privately-owned businesses, have between 1 and 19 employees, are incorporated, and are majority-owned by a First Nations person(s). Similar to previous CCAB research,¹ over half (58%) of the businesses surveyed are owned by men, with over one-third (37%) representing women-owned businesses; the remaining businesses declined to answer (Figure 1). There appears to be an equal distribution of businesses operating inside an Indigenous community (First Nations reserve, Métis community, Inuit Nunangat) and outside (46% and 44% respectively) (Figure 2). Of those businesses that selected neither inside or outside their communities, some indicated they had multiple offices on and off their reserve, that their community was not officially recognized, that they travel for work or are mobile, or that their office is located within an Indigenous community but not their own. Figure 3 shows the majority of responses were from First Nations businesses (72%), followed by Metis-owned businesses (18%) and Inuit-owned businesses (4%).

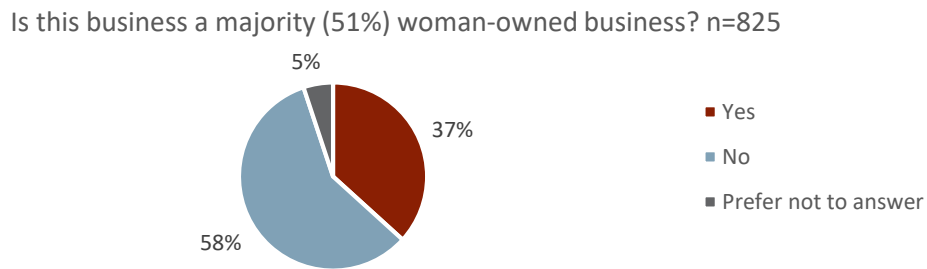


Figure 1

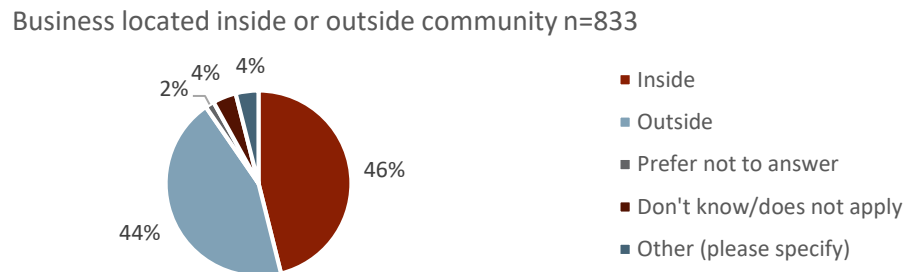


Figure 2

¹ CCAB. (2016). Promise and Prosperity: The 2016 Aboriginal Business Survey. <https://www.ccab.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/CCAB-PP-Report-V2-SQ-Pages.pdf>. In 2016, CCAB's national Aboriginal Business Survey found that male Indigenous business owners accounted for 63% of the sample, while female Indigenous business owners made up 37%.

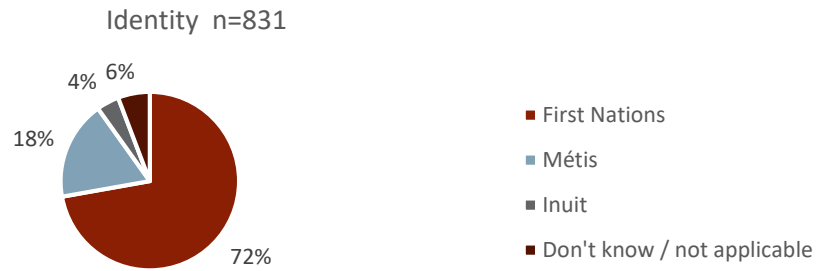


Figure 3

Data from all provinces were collected (figure 4); however, not all participants provided their location. Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec had the highest representation. The prairie provinces, Maritimes, and Northern territories had lower response rates but revealed important findings.

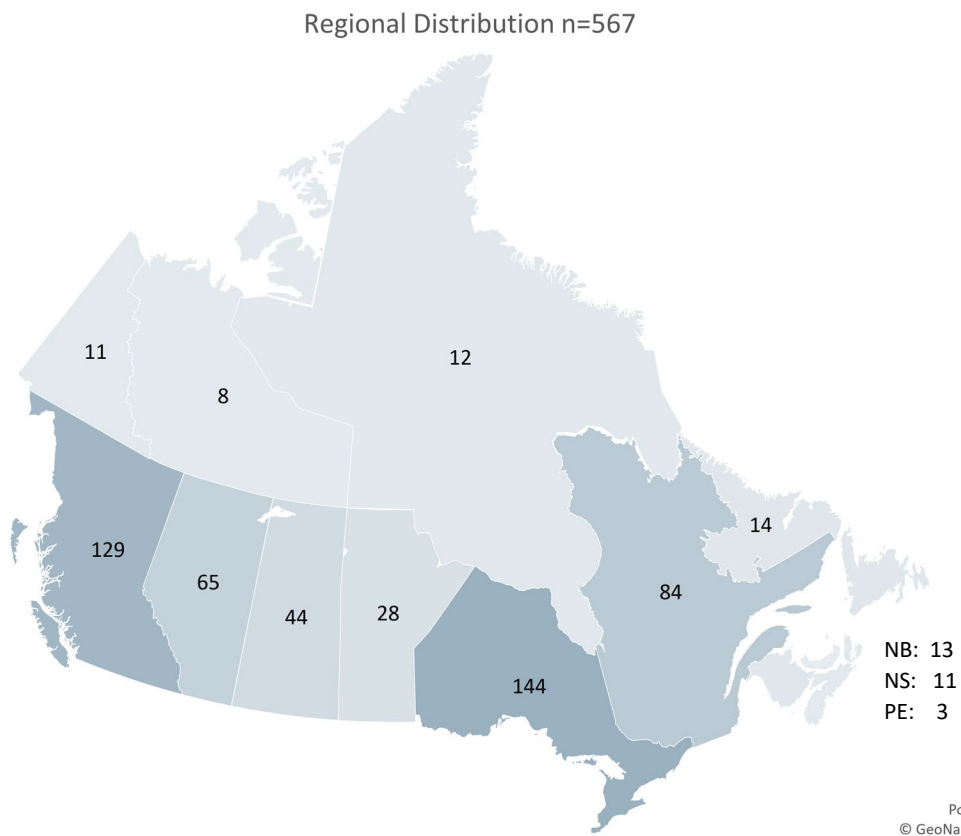


Figure 4

Business Characteristics

For survey respondents, the most common business size was 1–19 employees (60%), followed by sole proprietorship (24%) (Figure 5). Figure 6 shows that a majority of businesses are privately owned (76%), but the research also included Aboriginal Economic Development Corporations (7%) and community-owned businesses (10%). Responses in the category of other further specified ownership or business structure (such as a number of communities, Indigenous partnership, or joint venture) or the business type (not for profit or specific sector). Most businesses surveyed are incorporated (60%) and for-profit companies (87%).

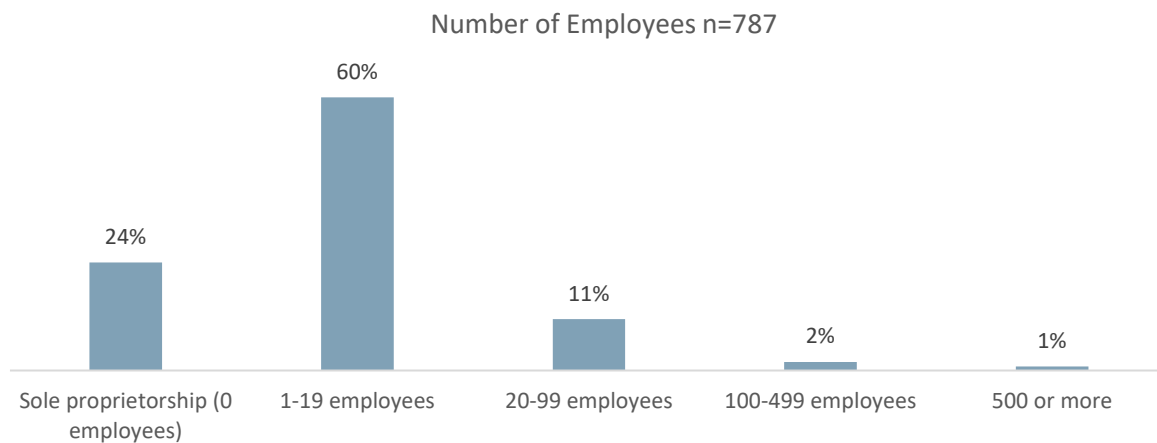


Figure 5

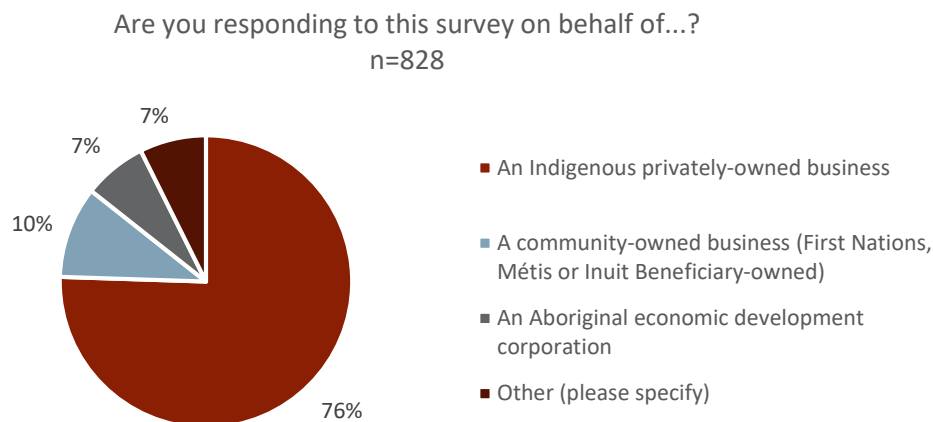


Figure 6

Survey respondents were asked to select the industry in which their business operates from the following North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories. The top industries reported by participants were other services (18%);² professional, scientific and technical services (13%); construction (11%); retail trade (9%); agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (7%); and accommodation and food services (6%), see Figure 7. Statistics Canada identifies accommodation and food services; health care and social assistance; arts, entertainment and recreation; retail trade; and other services as the hardest hit industries in terms of employment and layoffs.³ Figure 7 identifies these industries in a dark blue colour.

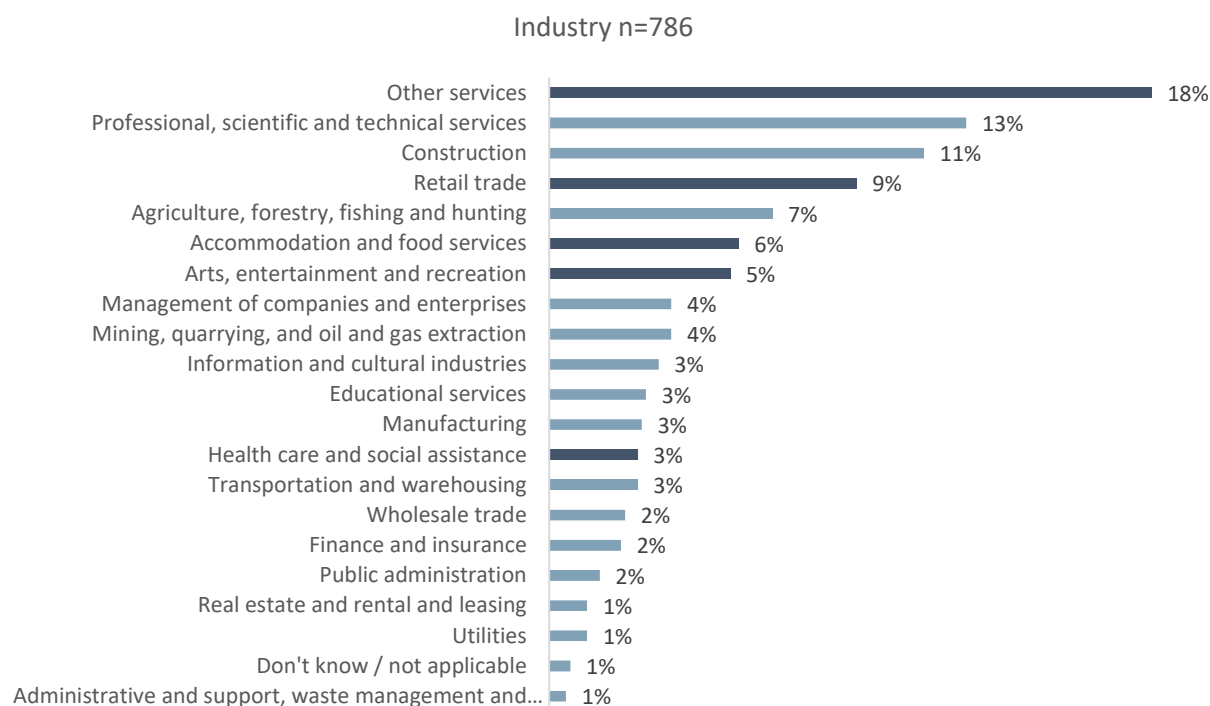


Figure 7

² NAICS includes services like machinery repairs, personal care services, and photo finishing in the “Other Services” category

³ Statistics Canada. 2020. “Table 1: Percentage of businesses that reported layoffs to staff and laid off 80% or more of their workforce, by sector, Canada, March 2020.” <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200429/t001a-eng.htm>

To better understand respondents' business operations, a follow-up question asked survey respondents to describe what their business does. Common responses included tourism, retail, web design, crafts and gifts, consulting, and contracting, among many others. Other keywords are displayed in Figure 8.



Figure 8



Part 3

Business Impacts

Business Impacts

Overall Impact

The vast majority (91%) of Indigenous businesses have experienced a negative impact from COVID-19 (Figure 9). The economic impact of the pandemic has been very (56%) or somewhat (35%) negative on Indigenous business operations.

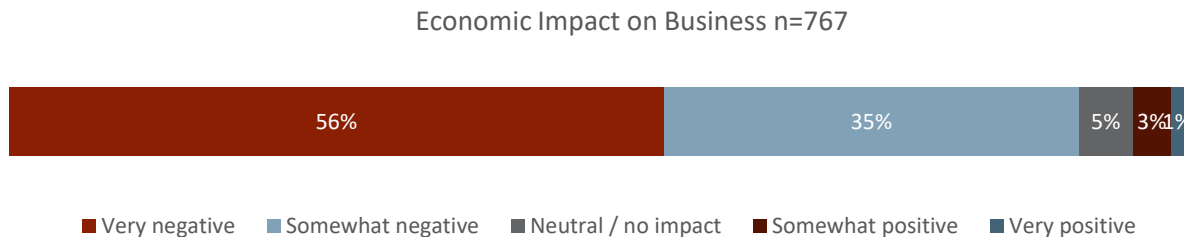


Figure 9

Critical Insight 1.0

On a five-point scale from very positive to very negative, 88.2% of businesses located outside of their community and 93% of businesses inside their community have experienced a negative overall economic impact. However, those with primary offices outside their community (60%) reported a very negative impact more often than those operating primarily inside their community (50%).

While 90% of businesses have experienced a negative impact on their operations, women-owned businesses are more likely to report a very negative outcome (61%, compared to 53% of men-owned).

Nova Scotia (82%), New Brunswick (79%), and Quebec (71%) are most likely to have experienced a very negative impact.

The top three impacts that are felt by a majority of respondents are a decrease in revenues (76%); decrease in demand for products or services (65%); and cancellation of meetings, gatherings, or events (59%) (Figure 10). One-third of respondents (30%) reported a shutdown of offices and facilities, and close to one-fifth (18%) have shut down their business entirely (this could be permanently or temporarily).

Unsurprisingly, the data demonstrate that all Indigenous businesses surveyed have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in some way, with only 1% of respondents indicating no current impacts to their business operations (Figure 10).

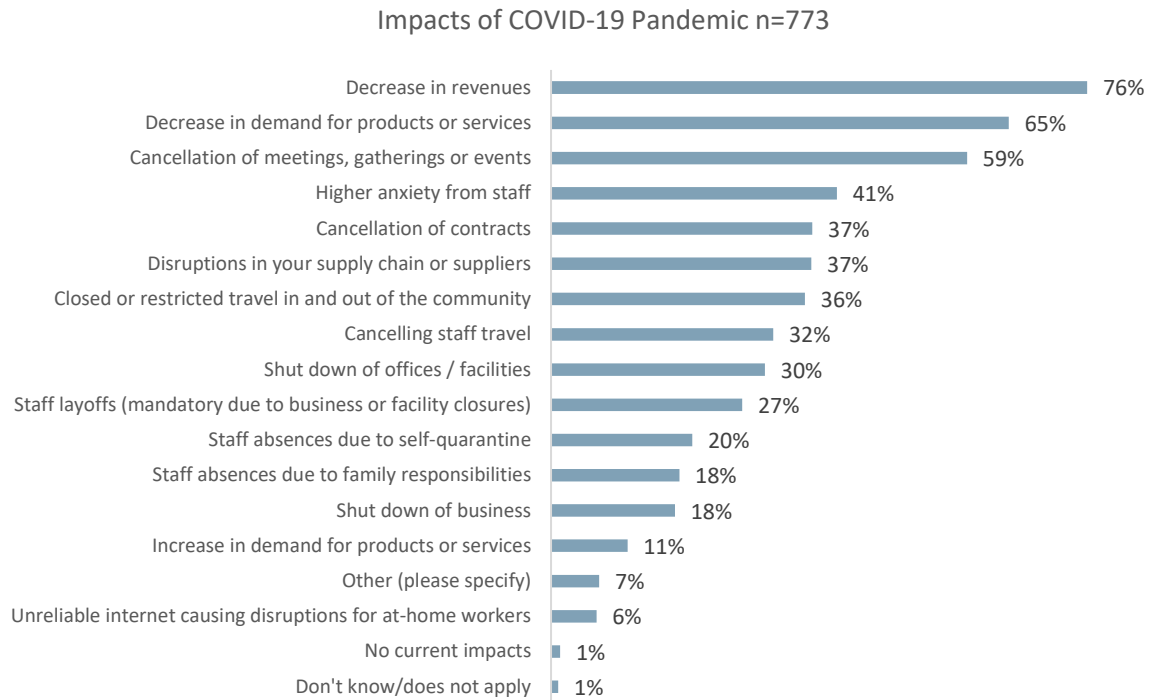


Figure 10

Gross Annual Revenues

In the past fiscal year, over one-third (37%) of businesses surveyed reported 0–\$100K in gross annual revenue and another third (33%) reported \$100K–\$499K. The final third (34%) reported revenues over \$500K — which indicates a broad range of business sizes (Figure 11).

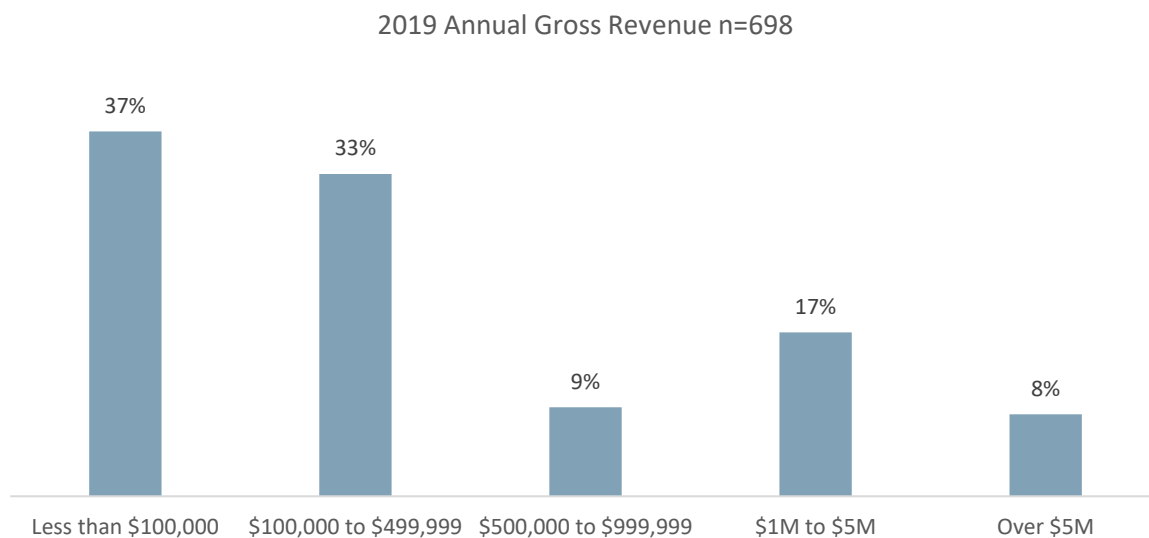


Figure 11

Just over two-thirds (67%) of Indigenous businesses surveyed have seen a decrease in revenues from January 2020 to March 2020, when compared to revenues earned from the same time period in 2019 (Figure 12). Of those businesses, 38% reported a decrease in revenues of 40% or more. This figure is slightly above the Canadian average when compared to data collected from the Canadian Survey on Business Conditions in March 2020, which reports that revenues for 32.3% of Canadian businesses had dropped by 40% or more from the previous year.⁴ In addition, over half of Indigenous businesses surveyed in 11 provinces and territories saw a decline of 20% or more, with New Brunswick (79%), Nova Scotia (73%), and Newfoundland (69%) being hit hardest — this figure is significant when compared to Statistics Canada data that reported that, among Canadian businesses, only five provinces saw declines at this level.⁵

Notably, a small percentage of respondents (7%) have seen an increase in gross revenues during the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 12). Among the industries that reported a profit are retail trade (5 businesses); wholesale trade (4); manufacturing (4); construction (4); finance and insurance (4); and professional, scientific, and technical services (5). This could be due to increased production and demand for businesses that are able to provide PPE and other essential services that have been able to maintain or increase operations during the pandemic.

⁴ Statistics Canada. 2020. "Canadian Survey on Business Conditions: Impact of COVID-19 on businesses in Canada, March 2020" Government of Canada, 2020, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200429/dq200429a-eng.htm>.

⁵ Ibid.

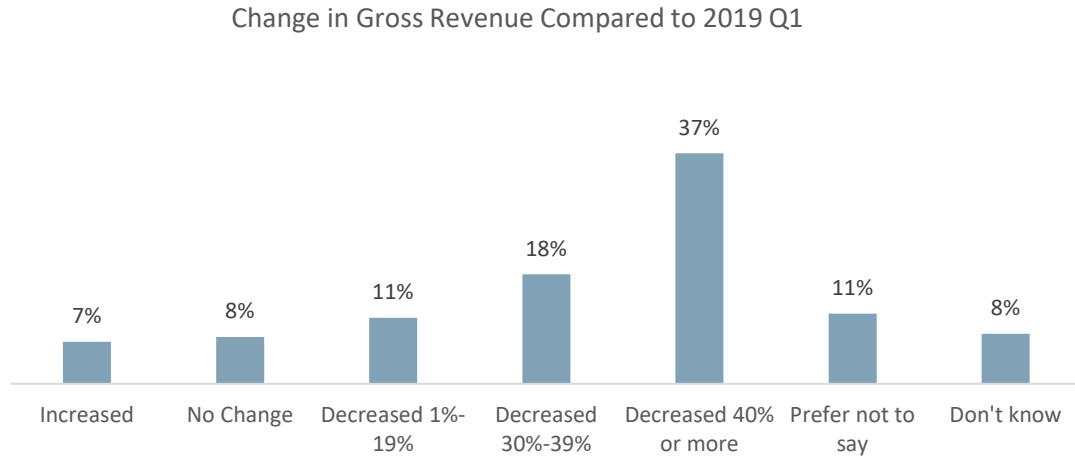


Figure 12

Critical Insight 2.0

Inuit-owned businesses are most likely to have experienced a revenue drop of 50% or more (38%, compared to 27% of Métis and 31% of First Nations).

Women-owned businesses are more likely to have experienced more than a 50% drop in revenue (36% compared to 26% of men-owned).

Employment

Indigenous businesses gave mixed responses in relation to the percentage of employees who can continue to fulfil the majority of their duties through the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 10 shows that 27% of businesses experienced staff layoffs due to office closures. However, further data indicate that over two-thirds (68%) of businesses have seen an impact to staffing during this time (at varying degrees). Most notably, one in ten of the businesses surveyed report that none of their staff are able to work normally during the pandemic, another one in ten report that only between 1% and 20% of their staff have been able continue working as usual, and 14% of businesses surveyed have had no impact on staffing (Figure 13).

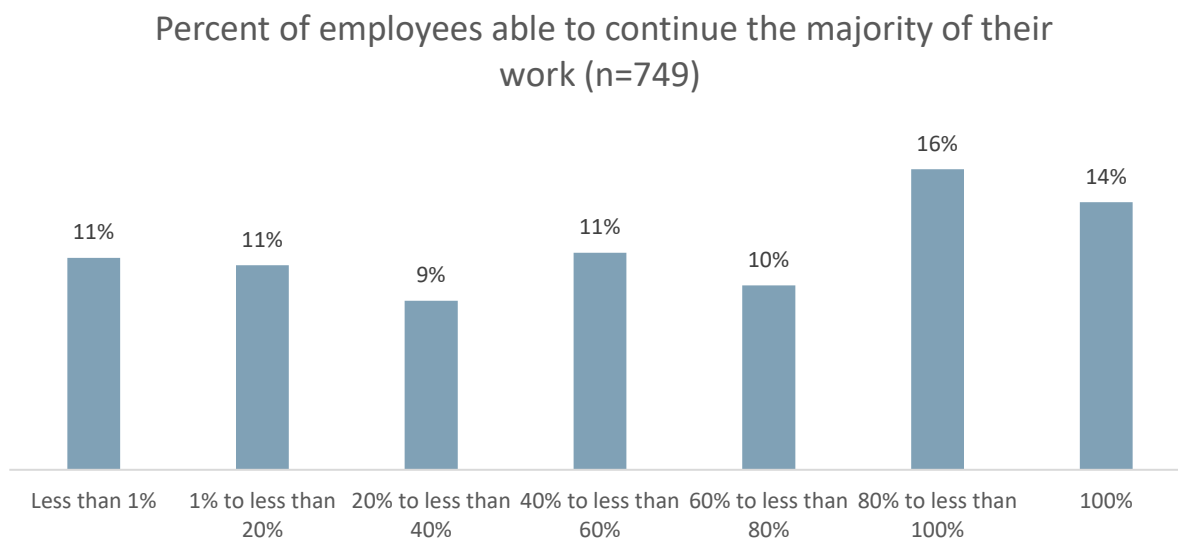


Figure 13



Part 4

Access to Government Programs

Access to Government Programs

Government support has been a key topic in the discussions around the COVID-19 pandemic. Current publicly available information on Government of Canada assistance specific to Indigenous Business includes:⁶

- \$306.8 million in funding to help small and medium-sized Indigenous businesses and to support Aboriginal Financial Institutions that offer financing to these businesses. The funding will allow for short-term interest-free loans and non-repayable contributions through Aboriginal Financial Institutions, which offer financing and business support services to First Nations, Inuit, and Métis businesses.
- \$117 million in funding to support community-owned First Nations, Inuit and Métis businesses, including microbusinesses, who are not eligible for existing business support measures. Eligibility requirements and additional details are forthcoming.
- \$16 million in funding to support the Indigenous tourism industry. The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada will administer the fund to businesses across the country that have lost revenue due to COVID-19.⁷

To better understand the current impacts of government programming and how they can be made more impactful and efficient, the following section provides an overview of lending relationships, financial assistance, business survival rates, and barriers to accessing government funds.

⁶ The Indigenous Business Survey Report reflects data collected in April and May of 2020. Since then, further supports have been made available and eligibility requirements for existing supports have been expanded upon by the Government of Canada. This section provides analysis of perceived or actual barriers to government programming during the time of data collection.

⁷ <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-finance/economic-response-plan.html#businesses>

Current Lending Relationships

Just under one-third (29%) of businesses surveyed have no current lending relationships with banks, credit unions, or government lenders. Approximately two in five respondents report having a current or previous lending relationship with large financial institutions, while one in five have a relationship with Aboriginal Financial Institutions. With only 22% of the Indigenous businesses reporting a previous or current relationship with an AFI, there is a clear need for flexible lending requirements and an expansion of business loans available through the newly announced government funding supports to new Indigenous business clients (Figure 14).

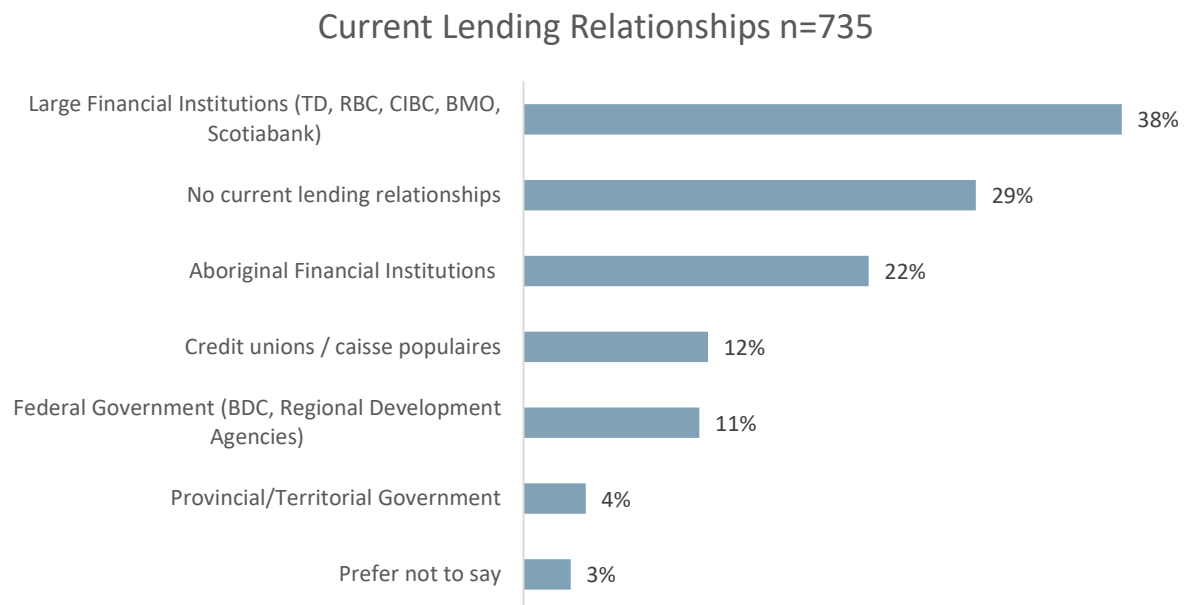


Figure 14

Of respondents who have or had a business loan, 35% secured it using personal assets, such as housing or other collateral (Figure 15).

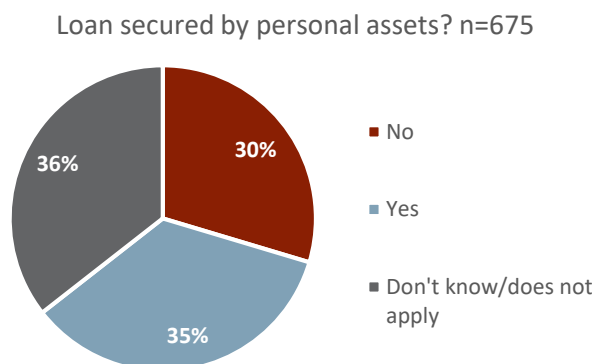


Figure 15

Critical Insight 3.0

Only 31% of women-owned businesses have lending relationship with large financial institutions, compared to 42% of men.

35% of women-owned businesses have no current lending relationships, compared to 25% of men.

Financial Assistance

In terms of financial assistance, nearly half (47%) of businesses surveyed plan to or have applied for government financial assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Figure 16). Of those businesses, just under half will require over \$50,000 in financial assistance to maintain normal operations for the next six months (Table 1). A quarter of all businesses surveyed (22%) will require financial support over \$100,000 to maintain normal business operations in the next six months (Table 1). Two-thirds (67%) of businesses surveyed reported gross annual revenues over \$100k, meaning that larger loans may be necessary to maintain day-to-day operations. This initial data emphasize the need for further liquidity financing, larger business loans, and support above the current stimulus package for Aboriginal Financial Institutions and their Indigenous business clients announced in April 2020; at the time of the survey this funding had been announced but was not yet available.

Table 1

Does this business plan to apply for government financial assistance?
n=736

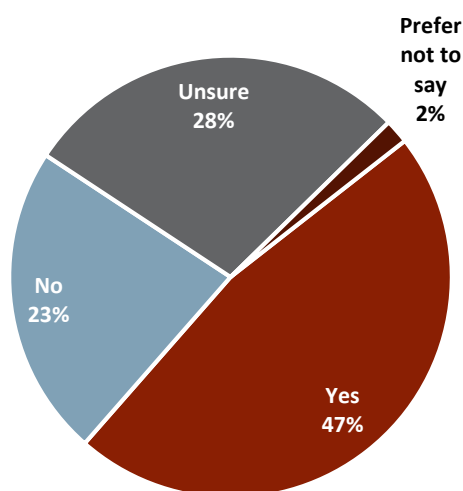


Figure 16

How much financial assistance is needed to maintain normal business operations through the COVID-19 pandemic? Please estimate for the next 6 months.

Amount	Percent
0-\$49,999	42%
\$50,000-\$99,999	24%
Over \$100,000	22%

Critical Insight 4.0

26% of men-owned businesses will require over \$100,000 to continue normal operations, compared to 15% of woman-owned businesses.

29% of incorporated businesses will require over \$100,000, compared to 11% of unincorporated businesses.

In an open response question, respondents were asked to provide their most pressing business concern at the time. The responses, while varied, reveal interesting results. As expected, sales, cash flow, and revenue are common concerns, in addition to travel and restrictions. Many businesses have a pressing need for funding, grants, or government support — noting this as their top concern. Understandably, there is uncertainty over customers, clients, contracts, and future work. Staff is another topic that was commonly reported, including keeping employees working, as well as their health and safety. Producing or acquiring PPE was also mentioned.

Respondents pointed to a need for increased focus on adaptation and innovation within their business. Some businesses reported a pressing need to build their online presence through e-commerce and marketing or shift their business strategy entirely. Notably, participants mentioned that they are seeking training and education on how to improve their online presence and accessing funding to become e-commerce ready.

Our most pressing business concern is...

“...training to update my skills so that I can continue my services providing engagement and consultation.”

“...to keep all staff healthy and able to continue to work.”

“...understanding and planning for changes with respect to travel to/from communities, air travel, and restrictions on gatherings/meetings.”

Business Survival Rate

When asked how long their business could continue to operate if no further supports were made available, just over half (56%) of Indigenous businesses indicated that, without support, they are likely to fail within the next 6 months. This includes 10% of businesses that predicted operations could not last a month without support, and 2% who indicated that the business has already closed (Figure 17).

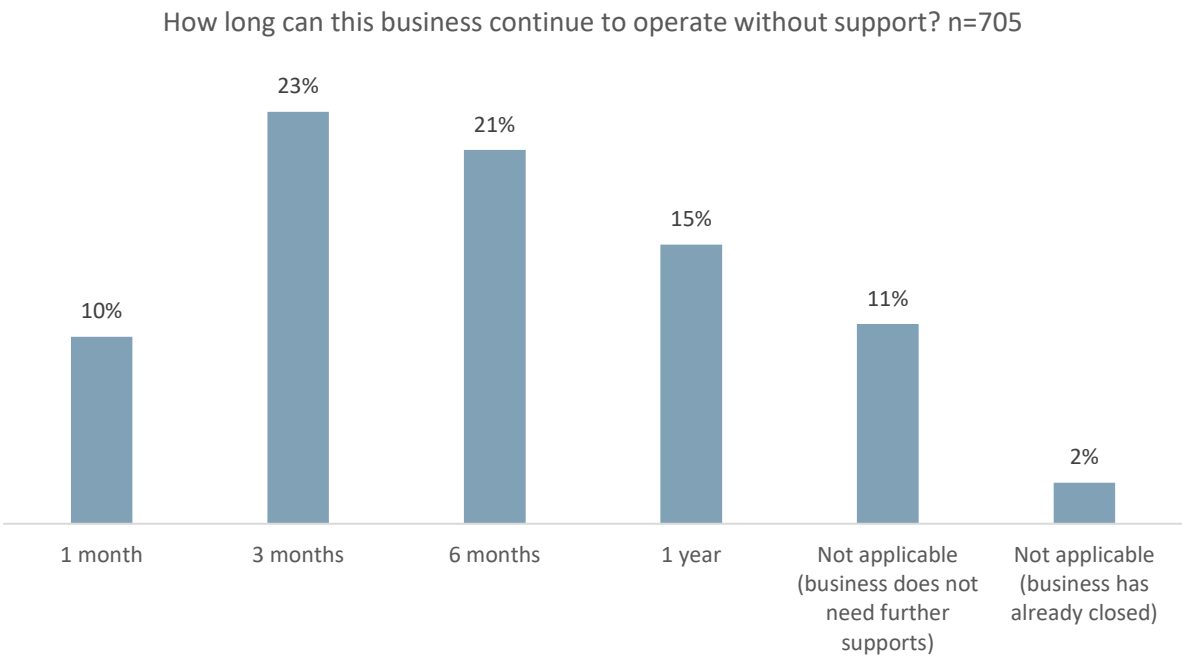


Figure 17

Critical Insight 5.0

60.4% of businesses outside of the community predict their business will not last more than 6 months, compared to 48.4% of businesses located inside the owner's community.

Women-owned businesses were twice as likely to report that their business could only last one month without further supports (15%), when compared to their male counterparts (7%).

Male-owned businesses were more than twice as likely to indicate that they did not need any further supports to maintain normal business operations (15%), when compared to their female counterparts (6%).

First Nations business owners are most likely to report a survival rate of less than one month (12%), compared to 7% of Métis and 3% of Inuit-owned businesses. Métis business owners are most likely to report six months or less (62%), compared to First Nations (53.8%) and Inuit (41%).

The majority of businesses (53%) do not have a crisis or continuity plan (a plan for protecting all staff and assets during a disaster) in place, and 39% of these businesses indicated that they would need support to create one (Figure 18).

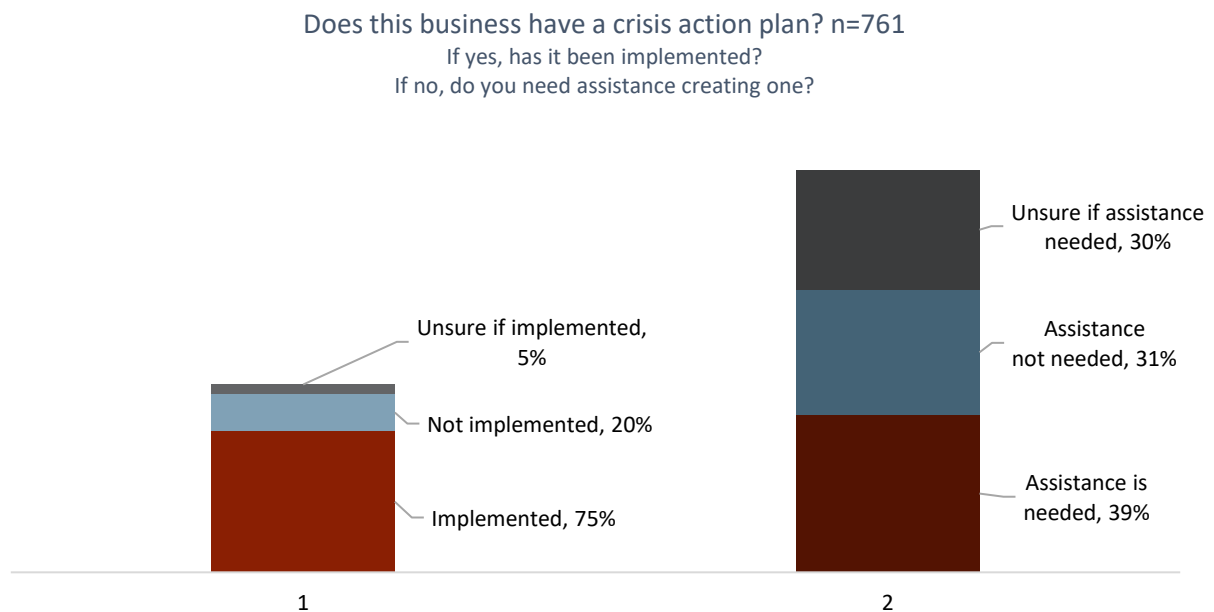


Figure 18

Barriers to Government Programming

The Government of Canada has implemented the COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, which provides assistance to individuals, businesses, sectors, and organizations helping Canadians. The business supports include wage subsidies, tax remittance deferrals, loans, and the Canada Emergency Response Benefit for self-employed individuals. Additionally, there is \$306.8 million in funding for small and medium Indigenous businesses, which will be implemented in interest-free loans and non-repayable contributions. When asked about perceived or actual barriers to accessing the Government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan, Indigenous businesses cited a number of obstacles. The top obstacles reported were insufficient short-term cash flow to repay tax deferrals or loans at a later date (22%); payroll is currently less than \$20,000 (18%); current business debt is too high to service more debt, even if interest free (14%); and a higher level of due diligence/guarantees required by mainstream financial institutions (14%). However, 12% reported experiencing no barriers (Table 2).

Table 2

If this business is interested in accessing or has attempted to access the Government of Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan (including tax remittance deferrals and zero-low interest loans), what perceived or actual barriers have you faced, if any?	
Answer Choices	Percent
Insufficient short-term cash flow to repay tax deferrals or loans at a later date	22%
Payroll is currently less than \$20,000	18%
Current business debt is too high to service more debt, even if interest free	14%
Mainstream financial institutions require a higher level of due diligence/guarantees for Indigenous businesses because of on-going concerns with Indigenous business risk/security (Section 89, Indian Act)	14%
Lack of assets that can serve as security	13%
Low credit ratings, limited equity/cash savings that serve as a barrier to federal programs administered by mainstream financial institutions	13%
No current barriers	12%
Inability to meet eligibility requirements of proving payroll due to employees being tax exempt	12%
Legal structure of business (sole proprietor or partnership not being supported)	12%
Requirements for financial statements and other financial records	11%
Lack of relevant information	7%
Interest rates are too high	6%
Language barriers	0%
Don't know/does not apply	25%
Other (please specify)	11%
Answered	698

Common themes in the category of other included cumbersome application processes, not meeting eligibility requirements due to Indigenous ownership, location on-reserve, or have not been in business long enough.

When asked about barriers to the Government of Canada's Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), insufficient work to rehire employees was cited as a top obstacle for businesses (18%).

No barriers to accessing the CEWS were reported by 15% of businesses (Table 3).

Table 3

If this business is interested in accessing or has attempted to access the Government of Canada's Emergency Wage Subsidy, what perceived or actual barriers have you faced, if any? (Select all that apply)	
Answer Choices	Percent
Insufficient work to rehire employees, even with a wage subsidy	18%
No current barriers	15%
Inability to access 75% wage subsidy for employees who are eligible for non-taxable (on-reserve) income	11%
Unsure if gross revenues have dropped by more than 30%	10%
Ineligibility for wage subsidy due to community-owned business or limited partnership	8%
Too difficult to set up work sharing agreements amongst employees	3%
Don't know/does not apply	41%
Other (please specify)	10%
Answered	689



Part 5

Procurement Capabilities



Procurement Capabilities

A small but significant percentage of Indigenous businesses surveyed can readily provide supplies or equipment to meet Canada's medical needs (12%), or rapidly scale up/pivot production to provide PPE (8%), shown in Figure 19. This represents 84 PPE providers and 57 businesses that can retool, from this survey alone, meaning there is the possibility of many more Indigenous businesses across Canada who can help support the federal COVID-19 pandemic response. There is little to no public data on federal procurement from Indigenous businesses at this time; however, within Taskforce networks there has been little evidence of Indigenous businesses being awarded COVID-19-related federal contracts. Indigenous businesses have demonstrated capacity, determination, and innovative thinking in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and further work must be done to ensure that the Government of Canada is actively engaging Indigenous businesses within their supply chain.

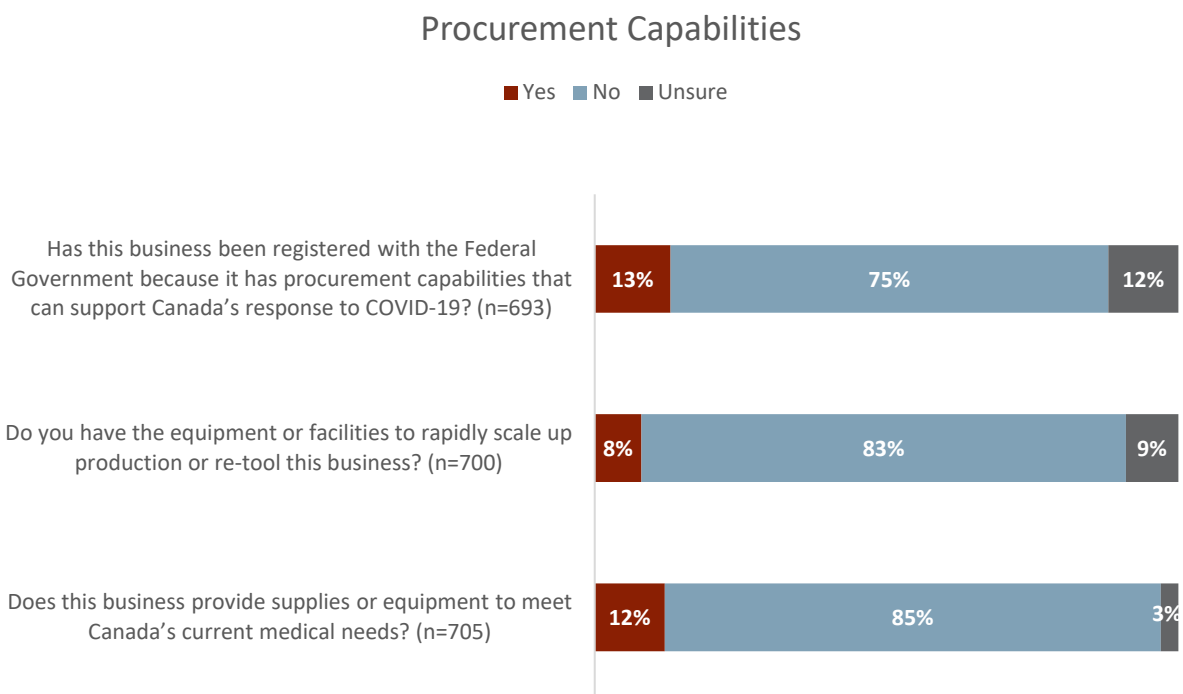


Figure 19

The Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce recommends further research to understand the capacity, supply chains, and flexibility of Indigenous businesses, as well as a deeper understanding of the barriers that exist within government procurement processes. Many other questions need answers: How many Indigenous businesses are bidding on federal contracts? How many contracts are currently being awarded to Indigenous businesses? What are the main reasons bids are unsuccessful?

Ultimately, the research and experience of the Indigenous Business COVID-19 Taskforce members points to a clear need for increased efforts and engagement from the Government of Canada when interacting with potential Indigenous suppliers. Governments and national

Indigenous organizations can continue working together to connect Indigenous suppliers to procurement officers. Efforts to increase procurement opportunities for Indigenous businesses will prove mutually beneficial for business and government — assisting federal departments in reaching a 5% Indigenous procurement target and helping impacted Indigenous businesses stay afloat during the pandemic and expected recovery period.



Part 6

Conclusion and Calls to Action



Conclusion

Historically, there has been a lack of in-depth data and information on the Indigenous economy in Canada. This data gap has been widened substantially due to unprecedented and often unequal impacts to Indigenous businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding the immediate impacts, needs, and capabilities of the Indigenous economy will be crucial for governments and businesses in terms of business survival throughout the pandemic as well as stability, growth, and expansion into the recovery period. The Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce has developed this survey to understand the current state of the Indigenous economy, inform businesses in the coming months, and develop recovery strategies and policies that are backed by in-depth data.

Data collected by the Indigenous Business COVID-19 Response Taskforce has revealed, unsurprisingly, that Indigenous businesses are facing an unprecedented crisis. Participants have experienced mainly negative impacts, revenues have dropped, and expected business survival rates are low. Nearly half of Indigenous businesses surveyed plan to apply for government assistance, but data also demonstrates there are barriers to qualifying for and accessing current supports. Many of the barriers identified in this report are exacerbated depending on respondents' demographics, such as gender or identity group. Indigenous women are less likely to have lending relationships, and Inuit-owned businesses are more likely to experience large revenue drops. These initial findings point to a need for further research into specific Indigenous business groupings, in addition to region, location inside or outside of an Indigenous community, and industry. Further research will ensure that targeted recovery strategies can be made available to those who need it most.

The data in this report was collected at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and further research will be needed in order to move forward. Data collection should continue throughout the pandemic, during the recovery phase, and post recovery. Recovery will be a particularly volatile time for Indigenous businesses as they navigate additional barriers and begin to operate under new health guidelines. Recovery programs and government supports will need to continue to adapt to an ever-changing situation and can be most productive with further data, as well as advocacy and input from Indigenous businesses across the country.

CALLS TO ACTION

Develop and implement policies, programming, and other supports to address the additional barriers for Indigenous businesses throughout the pandemic and expected recovery phase. Support services should consider differential impacts and factors such as gender, identity, and location of business. Government at all levels should work together with Indigenous businesses and local, regional, and national organizations to co-create policies that meet the unique needs of Indigenous businesses across Canada.

Provide additional funding to Indigenous businesses which have indicated they are likely to close in the immediate future. This can include larger business loans for respondents who have indicated they will require over \$50,000 in financial support for the next six months; expanded eligibility requirements and improved access to financial supports for Indigenous businesses that have no current or previous lending relationships; and emergency funding for businesses that have predicted business closure in one to six months without further support.

Develop and implement a proactive procurement strategy for Government procurement officers to directly engage Indigenous businesses that can supply or pivot to supply PPE. Indigenous businesses, due to their small scale, can be overlooked in programming that supports large-scale industrial retooling, including the Federal Strategic Innovation Fund, to supply PPE. Active and ongoing engagement by government officials (federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal) can include direct communication with Indigenous businesses for RFPs and upcoming tenders, coordination with National Indigenous organizations for increased communication to their Indigenous business networks, development of user guides and FAQs to navigate complex procurement processes; implementing metrics to measure and report on successful bids, and hosting debrief meetings with unsuccessful applicants. Governments at all levels should dedicated at least 5% of their innovation funds, including the Federal Strategic Innovation Fund, to support Indigenous businesses retooling to combat COVID-19.

Conduct further research to understand the impacts and needs of Indigenous businesses as they continue to evolve throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic and into the recovery period. As the economy begins to reopen, develop support measures for businesses to operate successfully, under new health guidelines. Additional research could include topics such as trade and export capacity, e-commerce, remote work and other digital infrastructure needs, and training and targeted skills development programs.

Outreach and programming to increase knowledge and accessibility of government supports. Over a quarter (28%) of respondents were unsure if they would apply for government supports. Many respondents mentioned the difficult and cumbersome application process for accessing CERP. Additionally, one in ten were unsure if they had registered with the Federal government to supply PPE. These findings indicate a need for improved communication and outreach by different levels of government, in addition to streamlined processes to ensure that Indigenous businesses are both aware of and able to access the available supports. With over 200 programs currently available, this is an onerous task for any organization and even more so for an individual business. There is an immediate need for not just a single location with all resources (such as a directory or interactive tool), but for further information to enable Indigenous businesses to understand the unique eligibility requirements, application needs, and an assessment of risks and opportunities for the various programs.

Works Cited

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