

## Womenomics: COVID-19's Impact on Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Alumni in Africa

COVID-19 disrupted the world, ushering the sharpest global recession in recent history and upending personal and professional lives. Checking in with our global cohort of women who participated in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women (10KW) and 10,000 Small Businesses (10KSB) programs<sup>1</sup>, we found that nearly all program graduates had experienced difficulty running their businesses. The foremost challenge was financial, but a close second was related to the unique role of women as caregivers with responsibility for running families and businesses. Women entrepreneurs are also overrepresented in the industries most adversely impacted by COVID-19. Still, our alumni adapted, pivoting their business models and adopting digital tools to succeed in this new environment. The evidence from the COVID-19 experience is clear: women business leaders are resilient. But in order to thrive, they need all the help they can get. See the full Goldman Sachs Asset Management report report at: *Womenomics: COVID-19's Impact on Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women and 10,000 Small Businesses Alumni*.

Female entrepreneurs in Africa (including Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Togo) have been hit harder than many of their global counterparts as many of the traditional challenges that female entrepreneurs face were amplified in the pandemic. Among program graduates, 76% of them are now less confident about the future, and 66% are less likely to expand their businesses. Still, they continued to exhibit resiliency. Three key takeaways to empower this population are 1) enhance access to financing, 2) provide support for caregivers, and 3) train entrepreneurs to leverage digital tools to their benefit.

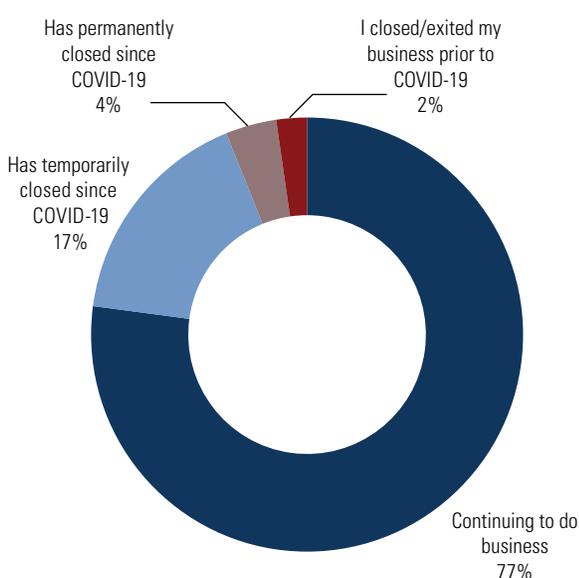
**Capital challenges:** Africa's 10KW alumni overwhelmingly cited access to financing as the biggest challenge to being a female entrepreneur (65% vs 44% globally), and declining sales as the biggest challenge as a result of COVID-19. Without robust government fiscal responses, nearly 20% of women had to temporarily or permanently close their businesses (vs 11% globally). In order for women to be able to grow into the recovery, we believe they need to have adequate access to capital and financing.

**Caregiving crisis:** Nearly three-quarters of the 10KW alumni in Africa are primary caregivers in addition to being business leaders, and 85% reported a greater focus on family commitments as a result of COVID-19. Almost half of the women reported that the increased focus on family impacted their ability to manage their business. Balancing personal and professional lives is no easy task, but proof they could do it resulted in 76% of women still being confident about the future of their business and their capabilities as a leader. With help to ease familial commitments, women leaders can be further empowered.

**Digital potential:** The 10KW alumni in Africa picked up digital capabilities during the pandemic at a significantly higher rate than their global peers, with data analysis, automation, and artificial intelligence increasing 50%, 90%, and 229%, respectively. However, the 69% who said that the shift in digital solutions and working patterns has made leading a business easier or more accessible as a female entrepreneur, was in line with the global numbers. We see significant potential that could be unlocked if technological training was partnered with the right forms of mentorship in this population.

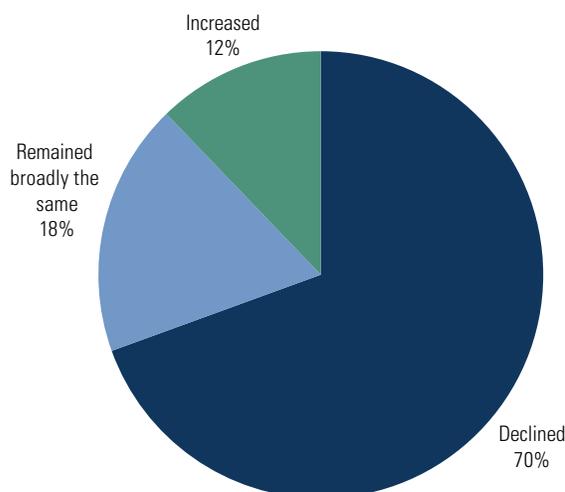
### The majority of 10KW Africa businesses are operating, despite significant revenue impacts

**Businesses still in Business<sup>2</sup>**



**COVID-19 Impact on Revenues**

Revenue experience relative to pre-COVID-19 (% , March 2021)



**61%**

Decrease in number of people employed



**31%**

Unchanged in number of people employed



**7%**

Increased in number of people employed

Source: Goldman Sachs Office of Corporate Engagement and Goldman Sachs Asset Management. As of March 2021. Data reflects current business experience relative to pre-COVID-19. Views represent those of survey respondents. Based on 131 respondents in Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Togo.

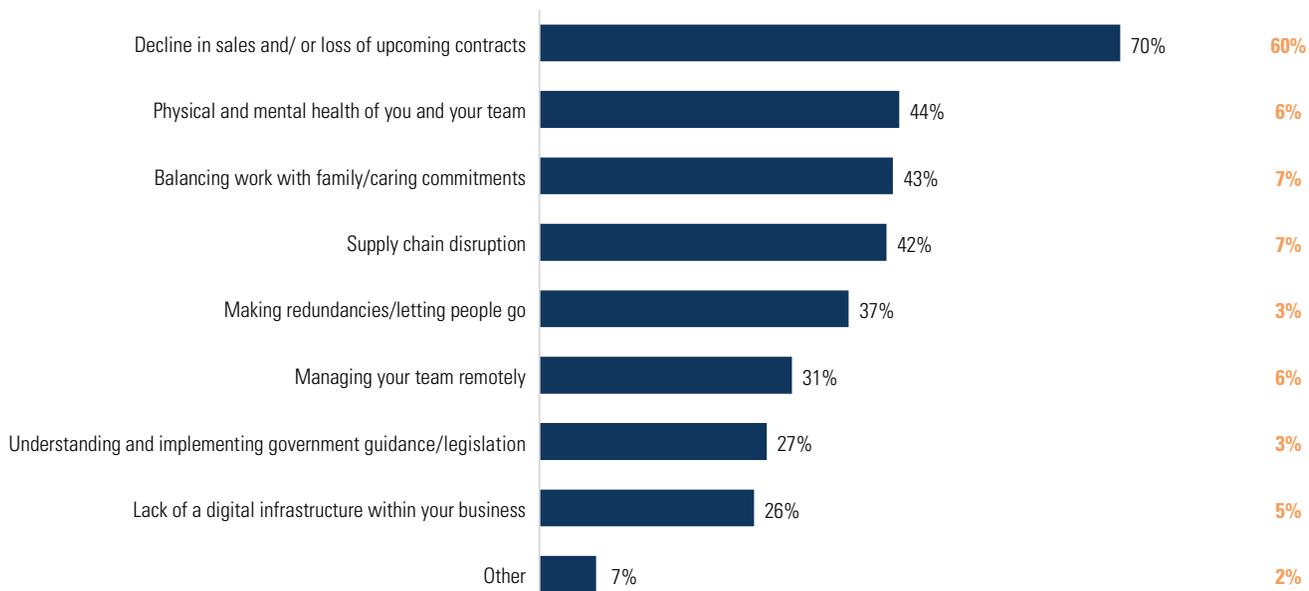
1. Based on the 2021 Goldman Sachs Women in Entrepreneurship: Global Alumni Survey data from women graduates of the 10,000 Small Businesses and 10,000 Women programs. The survey aimed to explore the impact of COVID-19 on women entrepreneurs and their experiences and priorities as business leaders.

2. Business status as of March 2021.

**COVID-19 challenges have compounded the existing hurdles that female entrepreneurs face**

**What have been the key challenges your business has faced as a result of COVID-19?**

**The number one challenge?**

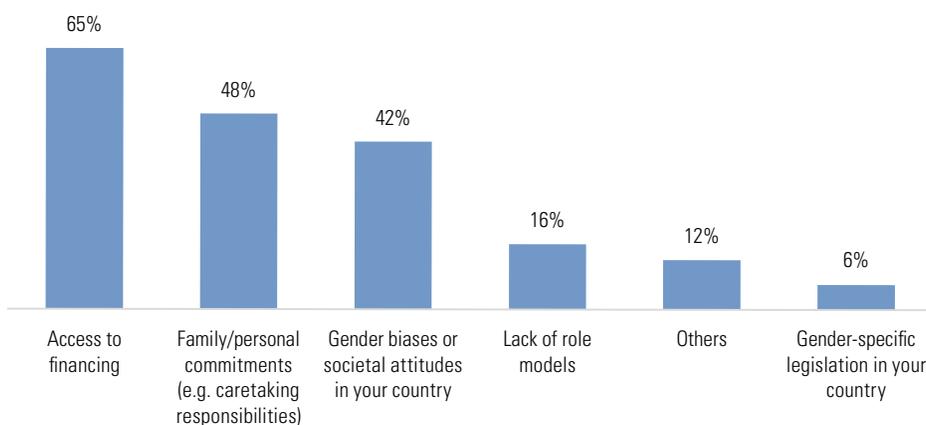


**Challenges In the Spotlight...**

**Regional Findings**

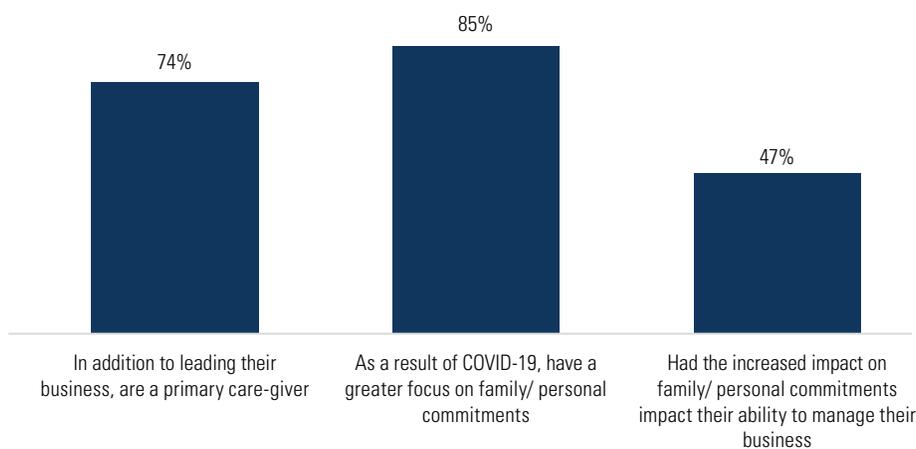
**63%** say that as a woman entrepreneur they feel the challenges of running a small business have increased as a result of COVID-19

**1. Most challenging aspects of running a small business as a woman entrepreneur...**



**2. Impact of caregiving during the COVID-19 pandemic...**

**81%** feel that as a woman entrepreneur the performance of their business is more likely to be impacted by factors beyond their control

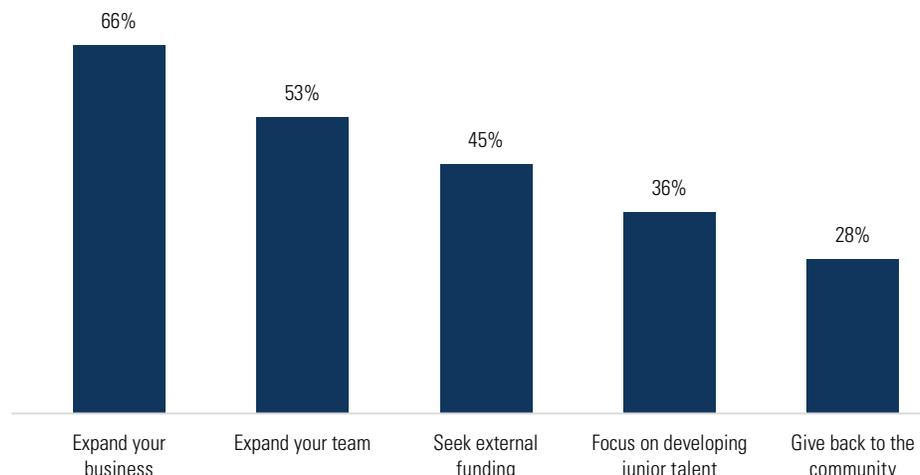


**76%** report that they feel confident about the future of their business, although

**37%** feel less confident about the future of their business than before COVID-19, and

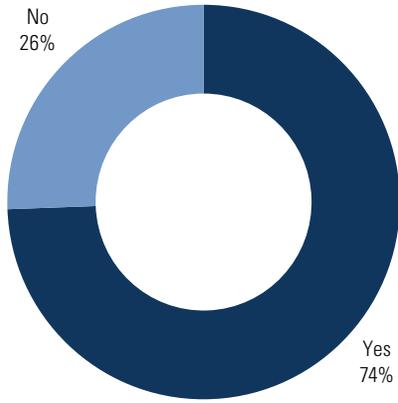
**21%** feel less confident as a business leader as a result of COVID-19

**3. As a consequence of reduced confidence, women entrepreneurs are less likely to...**

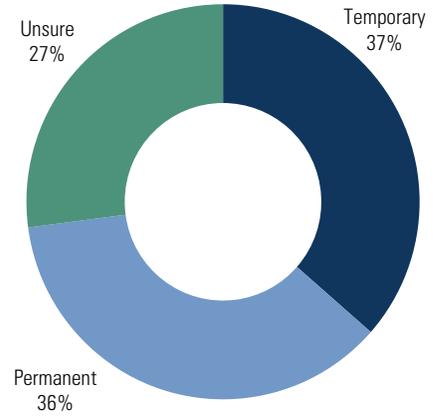


Female entrepreneurs have adapted in the face of COVID-19 by tilting toward digital capabilities

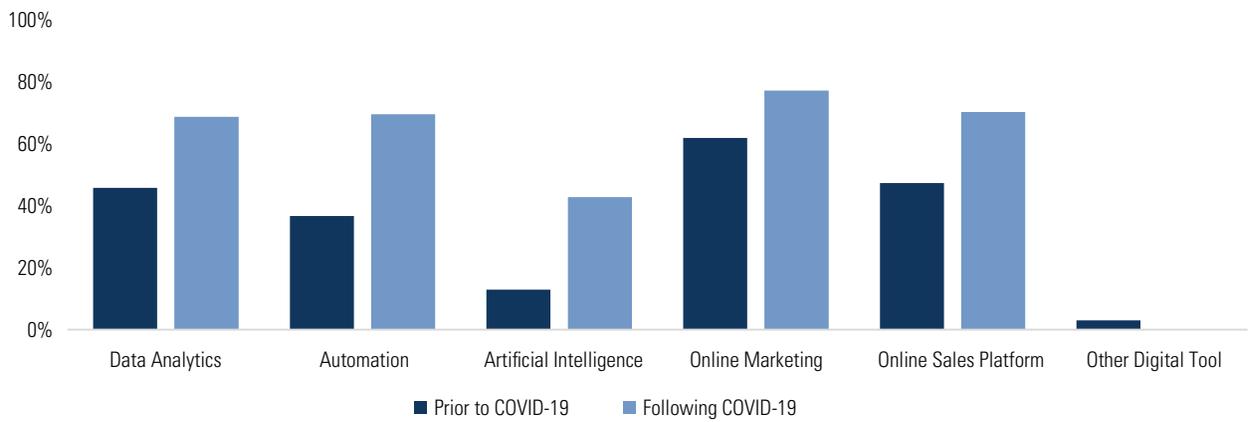
In response to COVID-19, have you pivoted or changed your business model?



Do you envision these changes to be...



Percent who used digital tools



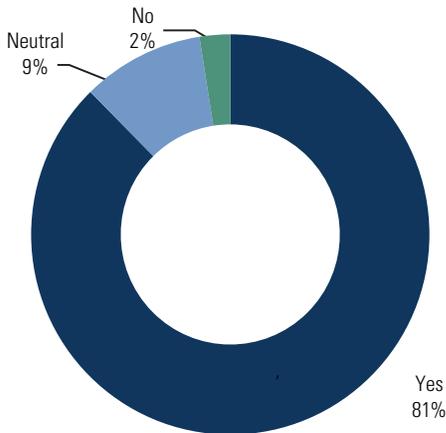
**75%** say technological proficiency is more of a core priority when recruiting new employees

**70%** intend to invest more in training for employees to ensure they can harness the potential efficiency and/or productivity gains from technological innovation

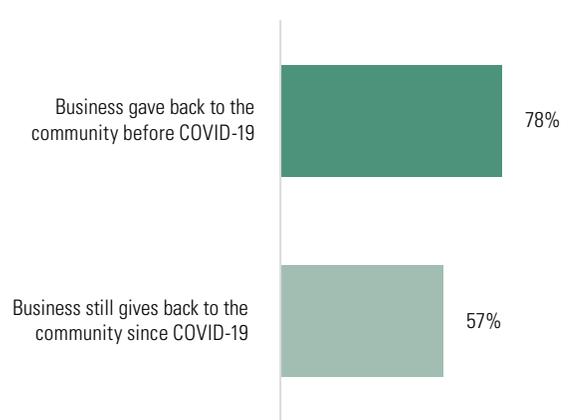
**69%** say that the shift in digital solutions and working patterns has made leading a business easier or more accessible as a female entrepreneur

"Purpose beyond profit" has been a pervasive theme

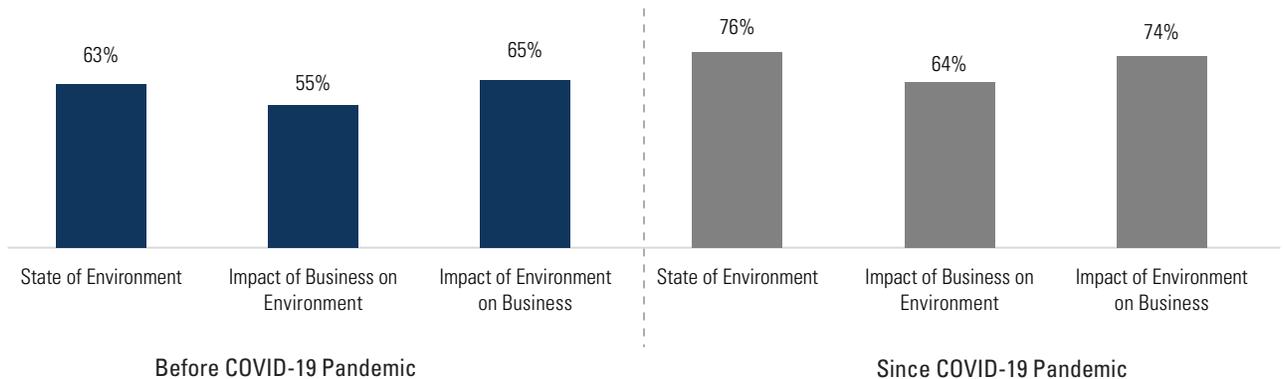
Do you think that it is important for your business to have a "purpose beyond profit"?



Respondents whose...



Percent of 10KW businesses concerned about the environment and the interaction between their businesses and the environment



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