



## Women Entrepreneurs

*Women entrepreneurs are one of the fastest growing segments of the Canadian economy and represent a growing economic force. Women-owned and women-led businesses provide 1.7 million jobs, compared to 1.5 million jobs provided by Canada's top 100 companies. In community-based organizations, women entrepreneurs are taking the lead in creating viable business opportunities for groups of women to improve not only their own economic situations but inherently the situation of their children, families, and communities.*

**Women entrepreneurs are creating and expanding businesses through co-operatives, social enterprises, and business incubators.**

**Role models, or catalysts, play a key role in promoting women's entrepreneurship. An excellent example is Judy Lynn Archer, Executive Director of Women Building Futures, a women's construction trade organization in Calgary.**

**CEDTAP-funded non-profit organizations promoting women's entrepreneurship, seek to improve the social and economic circumstances of low-income women in their communities.**

**60 % of CEDTAP recipients within this cluster are working with new Canadians.**

**Active and growing sectors include:**

- arts & handicrafts
- food processing
- textiles & design
- construction

**CEDTAP support ranges from:  
\$4,000 - \$20,000**

**CEDTAP offers a variety of technical services to organizations at different phases of development. The types of technical service accessed in this cluster include strategic planning, financial planning and administrative and accounting systems implementation.**



*"CEDTAP played an intrinsic role within the entire process of delivery of consultants who as experts in their acquired field assisted the women...The importance of the CEDTAP focus on community organizations and technical assistance providers was an appropriate fit."*

*Helen McPhaden, Stardale Women's Group, January 2003*

## Case Studies:

### Women Building Futures, Edmonton, Alberta

Established in 1998, Women Building Futures is a non-for-profit organization seeking to contribute to women's long-term employment in the construction trades. The organization serves Aboriginal, immigrant, young and older women who are under-employed or unemployed. The organization provides two training programs: *Journeywoman Start* for entry-level training and *Journeywoman Pre-Apprenticeship Program* for women who are ready to handle a demanding 16 or 26 week curriculum.

### Women's Own Resource Centre, South River, Ontario



The Women's Own Resource Centre (WORC) began in 2001, delivering employment and self-employment workshops and supports to women living in isolated, rural communities in Ontario's mid-north region of East Parry Sound. Women in these communities tend to have limited access to transportation, fewer and less skilled employment opportunities and as the environment dictates, challenging weather.

## Other community partners:

### 1997-2000:

Centre d'intégration, de formation et de développement économique, Ontario  
Cabbagetown Youth Centre, Ontario

### 2001-2003

The Stardale Women's Foundation Inc., Prairies  
Somali Women and Children's Network, Ontario  
Women and Rural Economic Development, Ontario  
Heritage Skills Development Centre, Ontario  
Riverdale Immigrant Women's Enterprise Centre, Ontario  
Niagara Food Innovations, Ontario

## The CEDTAP Contribution

The organization was looking to move away from the traditional non-for-profit structure toward a social entrepreneurship approach. The new company, "In the Company of Women Inc.", would meet the social objectives of the organization while focusing on a business mission objectives.

CEDTAP TA assistance will help with the business start-up in three areas: strategic planning, business plan development and business coaching. The new company will access a business license, permits and necessary insurance. After business start-up, the organization will bid for its first construction contract.

CEDTAP support facilitated a learning exchange between WORC and the entrepreneurial arm of PARO, a northern women's loan society that operates a business incubator for arts and crafts called "PARO Presents". This exchange was the catalyst for a strategic planning session which has resulted in a new business incubator called the Micro Business Development Centre. The centre serves as a forum for local micro-businesses to share retail space, resources and expenses.

*"Visiting PARO was a most helpful process for us...We found good ideas that we will be able to implement here such as lending circles and the incubator. The incubator has been a project of ours and is now taking flight as the Micro Business Development Centre."*  
Brenda Scott, January 2003