

**Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)**

**THEMATIC FUNDING REQUEST**

**ON A PROPOSED FINANCING**

**IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$6,152,500**

**TO THE**

**INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP**

**FOR**

**WE-FI'S 6<sup>TH</sup> CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**INNOVATECARE: ADVANCING WOMEN-LED SOLUTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN  
ENTREPRENEURS IN THE CARE ECONOMY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (LAC)  
REGION**

**BOLIVIA, CHILE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, AND MEXICO**

## Contents

<b>I. WE-FI THEMATIC REQUEST – DATA SHEET .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. PROGRAM/PROJECT DESCRIPTION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>A. Objective Statement:.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>B. Program Design and Key Activities .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>C. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>D. Country/Regional/Global context .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>E. Strategic Partnerships .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>III. IMPACT AND LEARNING.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>A. Theory of Change, Research, Learning and Knowledge Sharing .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>B. Research and Learning Agenda .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>C. Results Framework .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>IV. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>A. Risks Identified.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>B. Proposed Action Plan and overview of risk mitigation measures .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>V. COST AND FINANCING PLAN .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Annex 1: We-Fi Results Framework.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Annex 2: Risk Framework.....</b>	<b>20</b>

## I. WE-FI THEMATIC REQUEST – DATA SHEET

### BASIC INFORMATION

IP Name	InterAmerican Development Bank Group (IDB Lab and IDB Invest)
Program/Project Name:	InnovateCare: Advancing Women-Led Solutions and Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Care Economy of LAC Region
Country(s)	Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Mexico
Number of partners engaged	6 <sup>1</sup>
Private Sector, Public Sector or Both	Private Sector
Implementation Start Date	March 2026
Commitment End Date	March 2031
Supervision End Date	March 2032
IP Focal Point Contact (name, email, phone)	Vitoria Lima de Moraes, VITORIAL@IADB.ORG; OPERATIONS SENIOR ASSOCIATE (GPS/REM)
Key Staff Contacts (e.g., Project Lead, M&E Officer, Comms Officer)	Mateo Vasquez, mateov@iadb.org Masato Okumura, masatoo@iadb.org Cristina López Mayher, clopez@iadb.org Paula Pelaez, paulape@iadb.org Laura Giraldo, lauragir@iadb.org

### WE-FI FUNDING REQUEST

USD	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Advisory / Technical Assistance	700,000	900,000	900,000	1,050,000	450,000	4,000,000
Grants to WSMEs		300,000	400,000	500,000	300,000	1,500,000
Research & M&E	10,000	20,000	20,000	100,000	100,000	250,000
Administrative Fee	80,500	80,500	80,500	80,500	80,500	402,500
<b>Total We-Fi Financing Requested</b>	<b>790,500</b>	<b>1,300,500</b>	<b>1,400,500</b>	<b>1,730,500</b>	<b>930,500</b>	<b>6,152,500</b>

### TOTAL PROGRAM COST & CO-FUNDING:

Sources of Financing	Amount (do not round)
We-Fi financing requested (A)	US\$6,152,500
IP Contribution [1] (B)	US\$44,000,000
Public-sector co-funding [2] (C)	-
Private sector co-funding [3] (D)	US\$100,000
Additional co-funding [specify] (E)	-
Total Non-We-Fi Funding (F)= (B+C+D+E)	US\$44,100,000
Total Activity Size (G)= (F+A)	US\$50,252,500

<sup>1</sup> We expect at least six (6) partners with organizations with a strong track record in the care space.

Of which % IDA and % FCS	(IDA+FCS / G)	0%	
Co-Funding ratio	(F/A)	7.16	

IDB Invest aims to generate market-level awareness, knowledge, and advisory services that can translate into potential transactions with private sector clients benefiting WSMEs in the care economy sector. Through Component 2, we estimate engaging at least four clients, which could lead to an approximate IDB Invest’s investment of US\$40 million. Additionally, IDB Lab will coordinate efforts with existing and new projects, especially those focused on the silver economy, to support and expand the activities described in component 1, estimating a contribution of US\$3,000,000. Additionally, IDB Lab will aim to provide US\$ 1,000,000 specifically for the objectives of this project.

## InnovateCare: Advancing Women-Led Solutions and Opportunities for Women Entrepreneurs in the Care Economy in the LAC Region

### II. PROGRAM/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### A. Objective Statement:

The objective of this project is to enhance the economic empowerment of women through the development and strengthening of Women-Owned/Supported Small Enterprises and Medium (WSMEs)<sup>2</sup> and startups in the care sector.

Unpaid care work represents up to 21.4% of GDP in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), with women contributing about three-quarters of this value<sup>3</sup>. This coexists with the geographical dispersion of families that has led to many older people lacking a close family network to assist them in their daily activities. In the region, the supply of long-term care services is characterized by low coverage and very poor quality<sup>4</sup>. Because the services offered by the private sector are not easily accessible to all citizens and also lack regulations and oversight to guarantee their quality, the majority of the burden of care falls on families, primarily women, with significant consequences for their well-being and economic and social inclusion<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, the lack of long-term care services increases costs in the health sector. In countries like Brazil, nearly 30% of hospitalizations among older adults were due to conditions that could have been treated or prevented with outpatient and/or social services.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> WSME Definition: IDBG will continue to follow We-Fi’s definition of ownership/leadership and size.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP 2024, <https://www.undp.org/latin-america/blog/missing-piece-valuing-womens-unrecognized-contribution-economy>

<sup>4</sup> Aranco, N., Bosch, M., Stampini, M., Azuara, O., Goyeneche, L., Ibararán, P., Oliveira, D., Reyes, M., Stampini, M., Torres, E. (2022b). Aging in Latin America and the Caribbean: social protection and quality of life of older persons. Monography IDB-MG-01009. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank,

<sup>5</sup> Stampini, M., M. L. Oliveri, P. Ibararán, D. Londoño, H. J. S. Rhee y G. M. James. (2020). “Working Less to Take Care of Parents?: Labor Market Effects of Family Long-Term Care in Latin America.” (IDB Working Paper No. 10696). Washington, DC: Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo

<sup>6</sup> de Souza, D., & Peixoto, S. (2017). Estudo descritivo da evolução dos gastos com internações hospitalares por condições sensíveis à atenção primária no Brasil, 2000–2013. Epidemiol e Serviços Saúde 2017; 26: 285–94.

The demand for paid and affordable care services far exceeds the current supply, especially as women seek greater participation in the labor market. The gap between potential demand and current supply signals a large untapped market. There is significant room for growth in the formal care sector, especially for WSMEs and startups that can offer scalable, innovative solutions for childcare, eldercare, and support for people with disabilities. Across the region, women entrepreneurs are increasingly founding startups that offer innovative care solutions, but their presence remains limited compared to the scale of unmet demand.

Furthermore, life expectancy is increasing for both women and men in LAC, thanks to advances in public health and economic development. While this positive trend brings new opportunities, it also raises challenges, particularly a growing need for long-term care services to assist older adults with daily activities. Public funding for these services is limited, and much of the care is delivered by private providers, creating expanding business opportunities within the care sector.

Following the findings IDB Lab shared in its recent publication *Plan for the Creation of an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Long-term Care in Latin America and the Caribbean*<sup>7</sup>, this proposal is based on the following strategic areas:

1. Supporting the acceleration of women-led startups and WSMEs that provide care solutions, with the aim of addressing the challenge of scaling innovative models and technologies developed by women entrepreneurs.
2. Preparing the financial market ecosystem and the real sector economy to effectively respond to the increasing demand from WSMEs in the care economy.

## **B. Program Design and Key Activities**

For the implementation of InnovateCare, IDB Lab and IDB Invest will implement the following components and activities. The components might be implemented simultaneously, based on the stakeholders' needs and the progression of the consensus-building.

### **Component 1: Strengthening of women-led care solutions (WeFi funding US\$4,000,000: IDB Lab US\$ 1,000,000)**

The objective of this component is to strengthen the ecosystem for WSMEs offering care solutions, by working with Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs), building a strong pipeline of WSMEs, and facilitating market connections.

**Subcomponent 1.1: Strengthening Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESOs) (US\$2,300,000):** To prepare existing ESOs, including accelerators, to support women-led startups and initiatives in the care economy, IDB Lab: (i) will conduct comprehensive capacity-building workshops focused on gender-responsive mentoring, inclusive business coaching, and tailored access to finance strategies that address unique barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in care services. (ii) Additionally, we will develop and implement customized toolkits and strengthen digital platforms for these ecosystem players to enhance their outreach, networking, and resource mobilization, specifically designed to empower women-led small and medium enterprises (WSMEs) delivering high-impact care solutions. These platforms will serve beneficiary WSMEs and ESOs. WSMEs will have access to digital tools, relevant sectoral information, and training material. Ecosystem stakeholders will be able to follow up with participants post-training, share opportunities, and create connections. (iii) Specific women-led initiatives supported by these accelerators/incubators will be selected to receive direct funding (grants) of a maximum of US\$100,000.

---

<sup>7</sup> IDB Lab, 2025 De Anca, C., Campos, N. M., Galdón, C., & Gutiérrez, E. (2025). *Plan for the Creation of an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Long-Term Care in Latin America and The Caribbean*. <https://doi.org/10.18235/0013369>

Selection criteria will be developed during the execution of the project, and they will include (a) the potential impact on the poor and vulnerable population, (b) the level of innovation, and (c) scalability.

**Subcomponent 1.2. Building a strong pipeline of women-led solutions (USD 2,100,000):** (i) IDB Lab will develop a mapping of women-led care solutions ranging from established WSMEs, to women-led non-profit organizations, and individual women willing and with the potential to build a new business or become a leader in an already existing care business. Drawing from our experience with the [Silver Region initiative](#), businesses providing care solutions are more socially driven than startup-type. In other words, these businesses are not the target of investments, but they still have a relevant role to play in their communities. This component will offer business training, connections, mentoring, and other support to strengthen their business model, expand their reach, and increase their income.

This exercise will include women who provide care solutions as individuals, but who are interested in exploring the option of transforming their services into an enterprise. These women will receive business training to develop their business plan. The project will monitor how many of these business ideas translate into an enterprise during the life of the project.

This component will focus on women-led solutions that:

- a. Provide long-term care services for older adults, people with disabilities and children, improving the quality and increasing the quantity of services to address the exponential increase in demand in the region. This could include providing long-term care in the home, hospitals, and institutions, Telecare, Training and certifying providers, Robotics to facilitate independence (for example, wearables for monitoring people in cognitive decline, fall detectors, panic buttons, etc.).
- b. Provide provision of dependency prevention services for older adults, to extend healthy lifespans and alleviate pressure on existing services. This could include connected health, telemedicine, and AI technologies. For instance, AI-powered agents can support virtual care delivery, enabling real-time health tracking, emergency response, and remote consultations.
- c. Provide task-sharing models for doctors and nurses.
- d. Solutions that provide training of caregivers in specific skills according to the public they serve. We will work with existing institutions providing this training in each country, considering the minimum legal requirements to be considered a care professional in each country.

**Subcomponent 1.3. Market connections (US\$600,000):** WSMEs need support in creating business connections. Identifying and accessing quality care services is one of the biggest challenges faced by LAC regarding its exponentially aging population, and by families with children and dependent people with disabilities. Making the match between offer and demand is essential to have a real impact in the care sector. Thus, through this component, we will connect trained women-led enterprises providing care services with potential public and private organizations such as hospitals, institutions, and corporations. We will organize networking events, sector-specific roundtables, and partnership forums designed to foster direct engagement, while a team of relationship managers will conduct needs assessments and capacity evaluations to ensure alignment and quality standards. Additionally, we will implement a feedback and monitoring system to continuously refine matches, support contract negotiations, and provide ongoing capacity-building to strengthen collaboration and maximize social impact.

## **Component 2: Access to Finance for WSMEs in the care sector (US\$1,500,000)**

This component, to be executed by IDB Invest, is designed to strengthen supply-side readiness for the care economy's growing demand by combining market-level preparedness with advisory services for financial intermediaries<sup>8</sup> or relevant corporates.

IDB Invest's experience demonstrates the value of fostering an enabling environment and market readiness, combined with lending to financial institutions and targeted advisory services, to significantly expand WSMEs' access to finance. Under this component, IDB Invest will strengthen the supply side for financing WSMEs in the care sector by enhancing access to capital and building WSMEs skills through financial intermediaries. The component is structured into three subcomponents: market-level readiness, support for financial intermediaries or corporates, and support for WSMEs.

**Sub-component 2.1. Market-Level Readiness (US\$540,000):** Activities include: (i) create a categorization for financial intermediaries, defining what constitutes a women-led enterprise in the care sector, and recommend possible indicators to track impact. (ii) Develop and disseminate knowledge products for financial intermediaries, in partnership with ecosystem players (such as bankers, cooperatives, fintechs, and MFIs associations), that present the evidence, business case, and entry points of financing WSMEs in the care sector. (iii) Hiring experts at the intersection of care and finance to deliver and deploy knowledge to financial ecosystem stakeholders; and (iv) Organizing fora, training, dialogues, and business-case discussions among financial intermediaries on best practices for women's banking in the care economy<sup>9</sup>.

**Sub-component 2.2. Support to Financial Intermediaries (FIs) (US\$420,000):** Activities include providing advisory services (AS) to financial intermediaries or corporates interested in designing and piloting tailored value propositions and/or actions to finance women-led SMEs delivering adult, child, and disability care solutions, as well as domestic care services. (ii) identify, develop, and deliver AS to Private Equity (PE) Funds, FIs or insurance companies to develop products for WSMEs such as: credit lines or investments understanding WSMEs needs in the care sector, liability insurance for caregivers and care facilities, maternity and parental leave insurance, or the design of a bundled credit and insurance products for WSMEs taking loans to expand care services (e.g., life, disability, liability), among others.

**Sub-component 2.3. Support the access of WSMEs to non-financial services (US\$540,000).** Activities include equipping, through AS, real sector companies and financial intermediaries that receive investment from IDB Invest with a non-financial training module(s) on co-responsibility and awareness of the care economy. This training(s) will target WSMEs that receive capital or are part of the supply chain of a company; strengthening WSMEs in the care sector by building skills that enhance their business management, negotiation, communication capabilities, among others; measure the success of this interventions in reducing or redistributing care responsibilities through impact evaluations aimed at identifying what works and generating evidence to inform future initiatives.

### **Component 3: Knowledge, Monitoring, and Evaluation (US\$250,000)**

The IDB Group has established itself as a thought leader and knowledge generator on the care economy in Latin America and the Caribbean, positioning us uniquely to execute this proposal in the region. Through flagship studies such as *Care Across the Life Cycle: Building Care Systems in Latin America and the*

---

<sup>8</sup> Financial intermediaries: commercial banks, cooperatives, fintechs, factoring and leasing companies, MFIs, VC/PE Funds, and insurance companies.

<sup>9</sup> This component may include IDB staff travel when deemed necessary for the proper execution of activities or supervision.

*Caribbean*<sup>10</sup> and the technical note *Funding Options for Long-Term Care Services in Latin America and the Caribbean*<sup>11</sup>, the IDB has analyzed institutional arrangements, financing models, and the costs of care systems across 17 countries, offering evidence-based recommendations on public funding alternatives. Our research has also highlighted the persistent invisibility of unpaid work, disproportionately carried out by women, demonstrated by empirical studies in Chile and Mexico that show the sharp labor market impacts of motherhood and the role of school availability in enabling women's and grandmothers' labor participation<sup>12</sup>. Moreover, we have documented the structural barriers women face in accessing fair financing<sup>13</sup>, noting that gender gaps in credit access persist despite advances, with significant consequences for productivity and human capital development in the region.

Current research also identifies a central role for women in the provision of care and underscores the importance of engaging both private and public sectors in comprehensive policies to advance gender equality and the care economy. While existing publications have laid a solid foundation, most focus on the recognition and quantification of care and propose solutions primarily led by the public sector. However, deeper analysis of the coordination among multiple actors, as well as the financial and market viability of care solutions, remains underdeveloped. Building on the IDB Group's expertise, IDB Lab and IDB Invest will address this gap by developing a new knowledge product that explores the intersection of care with the private sector and finance, ensuring that innovative, market-based approaches complement public-sector efforts to achieve sustainable impact. The research will answer questions such as:

**Research Question 1: What are the impacts of integrating women-led care solutions into corporations, health providers, care institutions, and home care systems?** The research will examine the impact of integrating women-led care solutions into larger care ecosystems across several dimensions. Specifically, it will analyze the effects on the creation and formalization of care jobs; the increase in revenue and business growth of women-led care solutions compared to those not integrated with larger care providers; and the extent to which these solutions contribute to reducing or redistributing unpaid care work. It will also assess the impact within corporations that adopt care solutions for their employees, alongside other potential effects that may emerge during the project's implementation.

**Research Question 2: How can the financial sector catalyze the creation and expansion of women-led care services, and which business models demonstrate greater financial and social viability in highly informal contexts like the LAC region?** There is a gap in understanding how private capital and the financial sector can finance care models. This question seeks to analyze successful cases of women-led care ventures that have accessed financing, evaluating the social (reduced care burden, women's employability) and financial returns. It focuses on the connection between the financial sector and female leadership, an under-researched area.

### **C. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements:**

IDB Lab, IDB Group's innovation laboratory, plays a key role in supporting WSMEs providing care solutions, given its higher risk tolerance. IDB Lab can serve as a bridge to connect different stakeholders and can prepare the way, focusing on emerging businesses. Thus, IDB Lab will lead Component 1, in close coordination with IDB Invest, leveraging previous and current experiences, such as the [Silver Region](#) initiative. Under this initiative, IDB Lab has already undertaken a first mapping of startup solutions for

<sup>10</sup> IDB, 2024. [Care Across the Life Cycle: Building Care Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

<sup>11</sup> IDB, 2022. [Funding Options for Long-Term Care Services in Latin America and the Caribbean](#)

<sup>12</sup> JDE, 2021 [Gender gaps in labor informality: The motherhood effect](#)

<sup>13</sup> IDB 2021 Brecha de género en el acceso al financiamiento en Centroamérica y República Dominicana



older adults. It can serve as a great base from which to start, identifying women-led startups focused on care solutions for the older population. IDB Lab will also search for local accelerators, incubators, and other key organizations in each country to ensure knowledge remains and expands after the project. The focus will be on organizations with connections to markets, to facilitate the replication of the solutions identified throughout the project. A consultant may be hired to centralize and manage all activities under component 1, in coordination with IDB Invest, to ensure constant connection with the activities on component 2 and alignment with the knowledge product of component 3.

On the other hand, IDB Invest has extensive experience in generating market-level knowledge and incentivizing financial markets to better understand specific segments, such as WSMEs, by developing data systems, value propositions, indicators, and monitoring frameworks. From this experience, we have learned that narrow solutions are rarely sufficient to foster WSMEs' business growth, especially those in the care economy; multidimensional approaches that combine financial and non-financial support are far more effective. Through the WeForLAC project, IDB Invest has delivered over 15 advisory services to financial institutions to develop comprehensive value propositions for WSMEs, giving us the right expertise to design tailored solutions that are both commercially viable for FI clients and responsive to the care-related challenges faced by WSMEs. Leveraging our well-established network of financial intermediaries in the proposed countries and our proven technical expertise, IDB Invest is well positioned to ensure the successful delivery of Component 2. Through this component, we expect financial intermediaries to expand financing to WSMEs in the care economy by recognizing the business opportunities and integrating care considerations into the design and delivery of both financial and non-financial products.

#### D. Country/Regional/Global context:

The care economy is emerging as a business development opportunity for the region. Demand for care-related products and services, such as specialized residences, home care, day centers, and telecare, is expected to increase at least threefold over the next 30 years<sup>14</sup>. In Latin America and the Caribbean, there are currently eight million older people with functional dependency. By 2050, this figure is estimated to exceed 27 million. Those countries with more advanced stages of aging will experience a demand for elder care that will exceed the need for childcare<sup>15</sup>.

IDB Group has acknowledged the relevance of care activities in LAC, in terms of economic opportunities, increasing demand, low professional supply, and negative side effects, especially for women. The study by the IDB ***Caregivers for older people in Latin America and the Caribbean: overburdened and underpaid***<sup>16</sup> provides relevant insights for the design of this proposal.

Governments in Latin America and the Caribbean are increasingly focused on developing long-term care systems for their aging populations. This shift is driven by a combination of rapid demographic changes, such as a decline in birth rates, and a growing recognition that public policies are needed to ensure quality care for older people who require assistance. Although Latin America and the Caribbean is still relatively young region compared to other parts of the world (on average, people over 60 make up 13% of the region's population, compared to Europe (26%) or North America (23%)), it is now the most rapidly aging region in the world.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Envejecer con cuidado: Atención a la dependencia en América Latina y el Caribe, BID, 2019. Disponible en: Age with Care: Long-term Care in Latin America and the Caribbean

<sup>15</sup> La sociedad del cuidado: horizonte para una recuperación sostenible con igualdad de género, CEPAL, 2022.

<sup>16</sup> [Caregivers for Older People: Overburdened and Underpaid: Evidence from an Inter-American Development Bank Survey in Latin America and the Caribbean. Version 1: June 2024](#)

<sup>17</sup> IDB (2020). The Silver Economy in Latin America and the Caribbean

Caregivers are essential to this system, as they provide the daily, life-sustaining support that all other care services depend on. In Latin America and the Caribbean, like much of the world, most caregivers are unpaid women who are often family members. The demanding and time-consuming nature of this work forces many women to drop out of school, leave their jobs, or reduce their work hours. Others must balance their paid employment with extensive unpaid caregiving. Even paid caregivers in the region often face low wages and poor working conditions.

Unpaid caregiving adversely affects employment and career development: 48% of unpaid caregivers report they had to stop working because of their caregiving duties. This result has important gender equality implications, given that, among our respondents, 88% of unpaid caregivers and 92% of paid caregivers were women.

While the demand for care services increases, the supply is still weak and unprepared. One in four paid caregivers works without any training, and only three in ten have completed an extended course; eight out of ten unpaid caregivers have no training at all. However, training is associated with significantly higher earnings, lower levels of stress, and symptoms of depression.

For all these reasons, it is essential to support the development of solutions to strengthen the current care supply, and to reduce unpaid care work. Because women represent most caregivers, they have a good understanding of the care needs. However, lack of time, resources, training, biases, and other obstacles prevent women from becoming founders of startups or enterprises offering sustainable and scalable care solutions. Thus, this initiative will focus on mapping and strengthening existing WSMEs in the care sector and incentivizing more women to start business in this sector. For instance, the first cohort of the Silver Region's Initiative included eight women founders of startups offering care solutions, out of 35 startups supported in the Silver Economy. According to IDB Lab's study, *WeInsights 2024*, female STEMpreneurs who have been most successful in raising capital tend to participate in business support programs and start businesses as a team. Female STEMpreneurs who participated in entrepreneurship programs were more likely to obtain capital (78% vs. 58%), and the capital they obtained was many times greater (up to 30x) compared to those who did not participate in these programs.

Together, IDB Lab and IDB Invest have suggested a selection of lower-middle and upper-middle income countries for this proposal, considering the critical situation of women overburdened with care responsibilities and the institutional capacity we have to deploy and incentivize solutions in those countries. More advanced countries are expected to have more advanced solutions and knowledge, which we plan to articulate, capture, and transfer as examples of successful models to lower-middle income countries. Below is a description of each country's context regarding care.

In the **Dominican Republic**, a 2025 study conducted by McKinsey and sponsored by We-Fi for the WeFinance Code identified high care responsibilities as the primary barrier limiting women's ability to start and scale businesses compared to men. This finding indicates that unpaid care responsibilities can limit women's opportunities for entrepreneurship and contribute to differences in economic participation between genders.

In **Bolivia**, 83% of unpaid caregivers and 90% of home paid caregivers are women. Caring for older adults requires specific skills and knowledge. However, 78% of women who undertake unpaid care activities at home have no training to perform them, and less than 50% of paid home-based care workers have minimal training. Women who provide unpaid care activities not only have fewer opportunities to have a paid job, but a high rate of these women experience stress in a much higher rate (55%) than paid female workers (37%).

In **Ecuador**, women and girls aged 15 and above overspend approximately 19.2% of their time on unpaid care and domestic work, compared to just 4.8% for men; this is an over threefold difference in time

burden. This disproportionate share of unpaid care restricts women's capacity for paid work or education, contributing to labor market inequalities<sup>18</sup>.

In **Colombia**, 90% of paid or unpaid workers performing care activities for older adults are women. Women taking care of elders at home informally (unpaid) have double the chances of not having any training to perform such tasks and present almost double the rates of stress. In Colombia, the high cost of training appears to be the primary driver of this gap.

In **Chile**, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a care crisis, with nearly 1.5 million women leaving the labor market due to care responsibilities<sup>19</sup>.

In **Costa Rica**, more than 300,000 people (around 6% of the population) frequently help a family member or friend complete basic and/or instrumental activities of daily living. In most cases, the person providing the care is the child (43%) or spouse (32%) of the care-dependent person<sup>20</sup>.

In **Mexico**, the 2014 National Time Use Survey reports that women spend an average of 50 hours per week on unpaid housework (compared to 18 for men), and 33 hours per week on activities for the market and goods for personal consumption (compared to 52 for men). If we just look at caregiving tasks, women spend an average of 10 hours per week and men 7<sup>21</sup>.

## **E. Strategic Partnerships:**

The IDBG works in partnership with key stakeholders, always searching for synergies to widen the reach of our interventions. As a result, we start from a solid base of potential allies for this initiative. Once the project is approved, we will approach these global and local organizations, to explore the best way to work together, avoiding doubling efforts and looking to multiply our potential impact in the care economy.

**UN Women and UN Global Compact.** They have the mandate to work with the financial ecosystem in LAC to address the need to introduce innovations that guarantee the financial inclusion of women under their “Finanzas para Todas” strategic approach, which includes the segment of WSMEs in the Care Economy<sup>22</sup>.

**Equimundo** is a U.S.-based global NGO dedicated to advancing gender equality by engaging men and boys as allies in care, prevention of violence, and the promotion of healthier masculinities. Recognized for its leadership in care economy research and advocacy, Equimundo has developed influential studies such as the State of the World's Fathers report, which documents the role of men in unpaid care and calls for systemic changes to redistribute care responsibilities more equitably. IDB recently signed an MOU with Equimundo to work on different gender and inclusion angles, including care as a priority.

**Kore Global** is a Canada-based social impact advisory firm that seeks to accelerate progress toward a more just and inclusive world by transforming systems and structures. Recognized as a reference in care economy research, Kore Global developed the Care Economy Knowledge Hub with the objective of transforming the care economy by identifying, documenting, and amplifying market-based solutions that recognize, reduce, redistribute, and reward unpaid and paid care and domestic work. They emphasize that innovative market-based solutions in the care economy are both possible and increasing. IDB Invest is currently collaborating with Kore Global to promote sustainable care solutions for companies in the agricultural sector across Latin America and the Caribbean.

---

<sup>18</sup> [UN Women Count Ecuador](#)

<sup>19</sup> [INE Las Mujeres en el Mercado laboral](#)

<sup>20</sup> [Envejecimiento y atención a la dependencia en Costa Rica](#)

<sup>21</sup> [Envejecimiento y atención a la dependencia en México](#)

<sup>22</sup> [ONU Mujeres: Finanzas para Todas](#)

**CoreWomen** is a women-led consulting firm based in Colombia, recognized for its technical expertise in the care economy as well as in providing advisory services to companies on gender, diversity, and inclusion. The firm developed the study “The Role of the Private Sector in the Transformation of the Care Economy in Latin America,” which analyzes the critical role of the private sector as a co-responsible actor in care solutions. The report highlights concrete actions companies can take to transform the care economy, including improvements in personnel management, internal policies, value and supply chains, and community engagement. It also emphasizes the private sector’s potential to influence cultural and social norms through marketing and communication strategies that promote co-responsibility in care. CoreWomen is a strong partner for IDB Invest, with whom we trust we can deliver high-quality services for our clients interested in expanding their opportunities in the care sector.

**IDB Lab** is already working with organizations focused on care and the elderly. **The Arturo & Sesana Foundation (FAS)** of Colombia has been promoting the Silver Economy. It has a robust network of multisector partners both within and outside the country and is the implementor of the Silver Region Initiative (<https://www.fondoregionplateada.com/en>) that aims to innovate the long-term care industry in the region. In the first round of the open innovation challenge, it received 300+ applications to select 30 startups and NGOs. IDB Lab also has a strong relationship with **AARP**, a nonprofit association based in the US dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of people over 50 years old, through advocacy, resource development, and community building.

IDB Lab will also work with its country specialists to identify and connect with national organizations that could be strategic market connections to WSMEs. For instance, in Chile there are several organizations working on the silver economy from different perspectives that could be great allies of the initiative: PUC's Senior Lab, Travesia 100, Conecta Mayor, Sello Mayor, Talanton Foundation, ICARE, CORFO. Additionally, IDB Lab will work closely with partners from the Silver Region Initiative, such as Agora Partnerships, Latimacto, Innpectia and Grupo Impacta.

## **F. Sustainability, Quality, and Safeguards:**

To ensure sustainability beyond We-Fi funding, the program is designed to strengthen both the demand and supply sides of the care economy ecosystem:

- A.** On the demand side, women-led SMEs will receive targeted capacity building, skills training, and grant resources that enable them to scale their businesses, validate their business models, send market signals, and demonstrate proof of concept, positioning them to access markets and financing in the long term.
- B.** On the supply side, the program will work with financial intermediaries to design and adapt financial products that respond to the specific needs of women-led SMEs in the care sector, while also building awareness of the opportunity and institutional capacity to assess and serve this emerging segment. In addition, subcomponent 1.3 aims at connecting WSMEs care service providers to real sector companies.

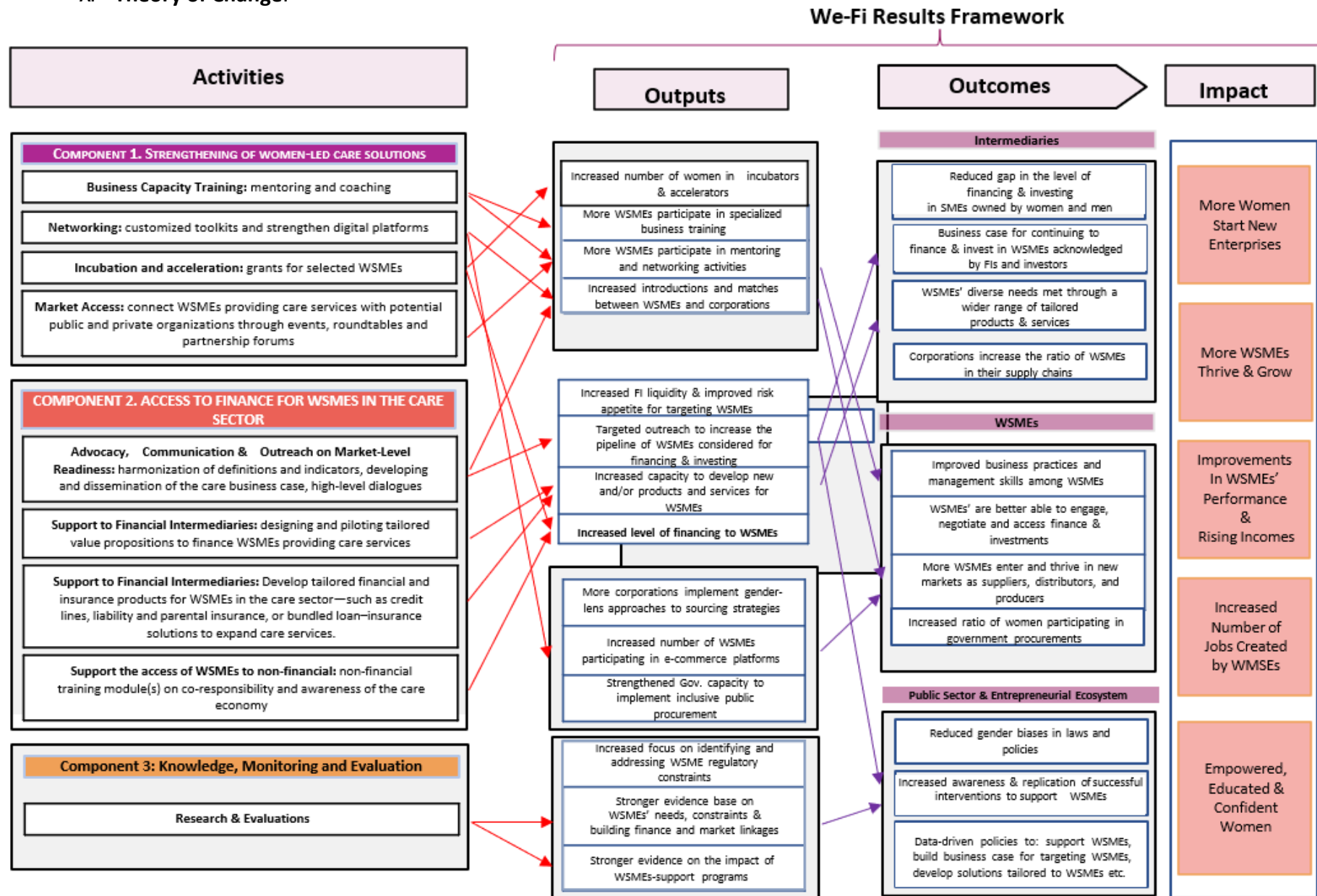
This dual approach ensures that the impact continues beyond the life of the We-Fi-funded activities, as both women entrepreneurs, financial institutions, and corporates will be better equipped to sustain and expand their engagement in the sector. Furthermore, by creating scalable models and demonstrating viable demand, the program will serve as a platform to showcase innovative business models, signaling to the market the opportunities to develop products and services for the care economy and incentivizing the creation of new enterprises. This will also generate opportunities for replication and expansion to other

countries and partners, thereby reaching a greater number of beneficiaries in a sustainable manner across the LAC region.

Regarding safeguards and quality, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has adopted a comprehensive [Environmental and Social Policy Framework \(ESPF\)](#) to guide its commitment to sustainability across Latin America and the Caribbean. ESPF integrates environmental and social considerations into project design, implementation, and monitoring, aiming to mitigate risks and enhance positive outcomes for communities and ecosystems. [IDB Invest's sustainability policy](#) will be strictly applied as a contractual requirement to potential clients. As part of our existing procedures, we assign to every transaction a social and environmental safeguard officer who ensures that clients provide evidence of decent work in line with ILO core conventions, covering aspects such as nondiscrimination, freedom of association, occupational health and safety, and fair terms of employment. The due diligence process identifies potential labor risks and requires mitigation measures or action plans where needed, ensuring that financed projects uphold decent work principles and standards throughout implementation.

### III. IMPACT AND LEARNING

#### A. Theory of Change:



## B. Research and Learning Agenda:

IDB Lab and IDB Invest will develop a series of knowledge products that study the private sector's role in the care economy, as mentioned in component 3 and subcomponent 2.1. In addition, we will capture evidence and lessons generated through program implementation, and we will assess impact and collect insights, ensuring that both successes and challenges are documented, as mentioned in subcomponent 2.3. We will gather both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to measure the changes in women's lives resulting from the We-Fi-financed program or project, thereby contributing to a broader evidence base on effective approaches in advancing women's economic empowerment.

In addition, to monitor the impacts of the project, follow-up surveys and in-depth interviews will be executed with WSMEs beneficiaries of components 1.1 and 1.2, to measure jobs created, increased revenues, and increase in the number of Care Service Beneficiaries. Local ESOs will commit, before receiving support, to monitoring the evolution of participants after the project. These organizations will be trained in the recollection and measurement of key project indicators to ensure standardization and the possibility of adding value across countries. Women participants will also be sensitized about the relevance of contributing to the project after their training by answering surveys and questionnaires. Digital platforms mentioned in component 1.1 could be used to monitor the evolution of participants after the project. The consultant hired by IDB Lab will be in charge of ensuring good practices by ESOs, supporting them with strategies to strengthen participants' responses, and requesting updates quarterly to identify potential risks and new courses of action to reach targets.

Using this data, we will draw lessons learned and analyze business models, along with other characteristics, to identify the best practices and highlight the key elements and factors that lead to success. These insights will then be shared with other WSMEs and the broader ecosystem.

**C. Results Framework** will serve as the primary tool to track progress and assess impact throughout the program's lifecycle. IDB Lab and IDB Invest will report annually on program activities and results, and semi-annually on sources and uses of funds, ensuring accountability and transparency.

<u>Indicators</u>	<u>BID Invest</u>	<u>BID Lab</u>	<u>Overall</u>
<b>Overall Output Indicators</b>			
<u>Indicator 1:</u> Amount of additional financing mobilized for We-Fi supported activities.	\$40,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$43,000,000
<u>Indicator 11:</u> Number of partner institutions supported by We-Fi that offer new /updated products, services or approaches benefiting women-owned/led MSMEs.	6	6	12
<u>Indicator 7:</u> Number of WSMEs with enhanced market linkages, including: WSMEs who sold goods	0	30	30

and services to larger firms/corporates/new market segments, and/or WSMEs who purchase goods and services from smaller firms/individuals, and/or WSMEs who won public procurement contracts.			
<u>Indicator 10:</u> Number of rigorous impact evaluations commissioned by We-Fi Implementing Partners.	1		1
<u>Custom indicator:</u> Number of market-level knowledge created	3	0	3
<u>Custom indicator:</u> Number of women caregivers without an enterprise (formal or informal) provided with business training	0	4200	4200
<b>Outcome Indicator</b>			
<u>Indicator 12:</u> Total number of women-owned/ led SMEs supported by We-Fi.	50	400	450
<u>Indicator 4:</u> Number of women-owned/led SMEs accessing entrepreneurial support activities from We-Fi-supported institutions (existing+new).	0	400	400
<u>Indicator 13:</u> Number of We-Fi-supported women-owned/led SMEs reporting an increase in annual revenues.	0	250	250
<u>Indicator 15 A:</u> Number of additional direct jobs created by the We-Fi beneficiary women-owned/led SMEs.	0	400	400
<u>Indicator 16:</u> Increase in the number of Care Service Beneficiaries	0	4,000	4,000
<u>Custom indicator:</u> Number of New-WSM providing care services created	0	100	100

## IV. KEY RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

- A. Risks Identified:** IDB Invest and IDB Lab have identified potential challenges that may arise during implementation. One medium-level risk is that incubators, accelerators, and/or financial intermediaries may not identify a sufficient critical mass of WSMEs in the care sector to support. In addition, another medium-level risk is that the WSMEs identified may not yet be prepared to connect with larger companies as suppliers of products and services, or to access financing. There is also a high-level risk associated with



companies lacking safeguard protocols that ensure decent work measures and quality standards required to provide services to children and the elderly.

In terms of political and governance risks, there is a low risk of public sector sensitivity as all activities will be focused on the private sector.

Fiduciary risks related to the project are considered low, thanks to the rigorous implementation of IDB Invest and IDB Lab procurement policies, which ensure that project funds will be used with integrity to achieve value for money and deliver the intended outcomes.

Regarding environment and social safeguards/standards, there is a low risk of financial institutions failing to align with IDB Invest's exclusionary list or not correctly applying the organization's standards in project design.

**B. Proposed Action Plan and overview of risk mitigation measures:** To manage the risks mentioned above, mapping efforts will be exhaustive and supported with an adequate budget to ensure the identification of companies with the necessary readiness to scale. In addition, targeted communications campaigns will play a key role. Dedicated consultants will be hired to lead outreach and awareness-raising efforts, ensuring that the initiative engages the right stakeholders and builds the visibility needed for success. Capacity-building activities will also be a key component, in which we'll provide an adequate budget and delivery of activities.

To mitigate fiduciary risks, all executing agencies and financial institutions involved in the project will adhere to IDB Invest and IDB Lab's Procurement Guidelines and Integrity Frameworks, which include a rigorous competitive selection process for consultancies and implementing agencies.

For risks related to ESG safeguards/standards, IDB Group's [Environmental and Social Policy Framework](#)<sup>23</sup> and [IDB Invest Environmental and Social Standards](#)<sup>24</sup> will be strictly applied as a contractual requirement to all companies that we work with through investments. All program activities will undergo an environmental and social safeguards review process to identify, mitigate, and address risks, including labor standards, safeguard protocols, and quality standards to provide services. The WSMEs beneficiaries that will receive training will be encouraged to integrate decent work measures that promote fair wages, training and capacity building for care workers, occupational health and safety standards, among others.

---

<sup>23</sup> The Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF) includes solid provisions for human rights, labor, community health, and safety, and more explicit provisions for people with disabilities, vulnerable groups, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, or other traditional groups, and considers potential risks

<sup>24</sup> IDB Invest's Environmental and Social Standards are rooted in its [Environmental and Social Sustainability Policy](#), which mandates robust risk management for all projects to enhance sustainability. These standards, applied through [Performance Standards](#) (PS), cover critical areas such as risk assessment (PS 1), labor conditions (PS 2), pollution prevention (PS 3), and resource efficiency (PS 3), among others.

## V. COST AND FINANCING PLAN

Budget Categories	Amount US\$						
	Investment Activities	Advisory/ Technical Assistance Activities	Grants to WSMEs	Total We-Fi Funding Requested	Expected Co-Financing	# of WSMEs Reached	Countries*
Component 1		2,500,000	1,500,000	4,000,000		400	7
Component 2		1,500,000		1,500,000		50	7
Component 3							
Support activities, Research, M&E		250,000		250,000			
Administrative Fee**				402,500			
Total				6,152,500			
<i>* if funding is allocated to more than one country per component please fill out the "Country Allocation Table" below.</i> <i>** for admin fees, input the amount under the total column.</i>							

Please fill out the "Country allocation table" below if funding is expected to be allocated to multiple countries per component.

This distribution is provisional. Final amounts will depend on the response of each country to the activities proposed. It is expected that in bigger and economically better performing countries there will be more potential beneficiaries and opportunities to expand the project. However, in smaller countries it might be necessary to increase efforts to create an enabling environment.

Country Allocation Table	Total Amount (do not round)	Advisory + ME	Grants	IP Fee	WSME Reached	Women reached	Private Sector Co-financing
Bolivia	US\$579,821.6	347,321.4	175,000	57,500	60	300	20,000
Chile	US\$1,178,571.4	871,071.4	250,000	57,500	70	1000	20,000

Costa Rica	US\$679,821.4	422,321.4	200,000	57,500	60	300	-
Colombia	US\$1,128,571.4	821,071.4	250,000	57,500	70	1,000	20,000
Ecuador	US\$703,571.4	446,071.4	200,000	57,500	60	300	20,000
Dominican Republic	US\$703,571.4	471,071.4	175,000	57,500	60	300	-
Mexico	US\$1,178,571.4	871,071.4	250,000	57,500	70	1,000	20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>US\$6,152,500</b>	<b>4,250,000</b>	<b>1,500,000</b>	<b>402,500</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>4,200</b>	<b>100,000</b>

## Attachment 1: We-Fi Results Framework



Attachment 2 Results  
Framework.xlsx

## Attachment 2: Risk Framework



We-Fi Risk  
Framework.docx