

Accelerating high-growth entrepreneurship: Policy discussion

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3rd Accelerating Growth for Women Entrepreneurs Conference
EBRD, London
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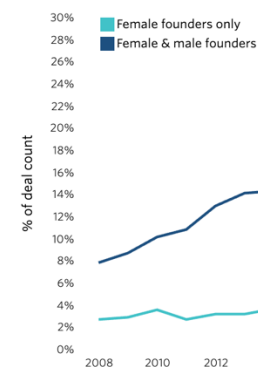
A relevant issue in Europe and US...

24% of VC deals financed female (co-)founded startups in Europe, and 23.3% in the USA.

17.7% of VC capital was allocated to female (co-)founded startups in Europe, and 42.3% in the USA.

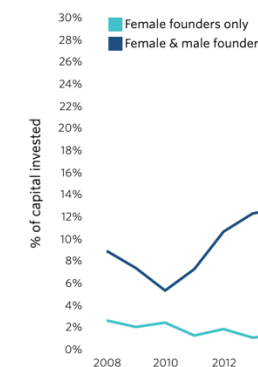
Europe

Female (co-)founded VC deal count %



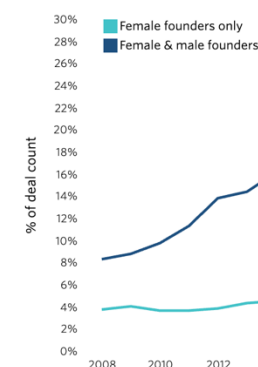
*NOTE: the above groups are mutually exclusive

Female (co-)founded VC capital %



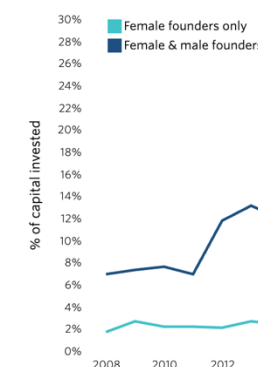
USA

Female (co-)founded VC deal count %



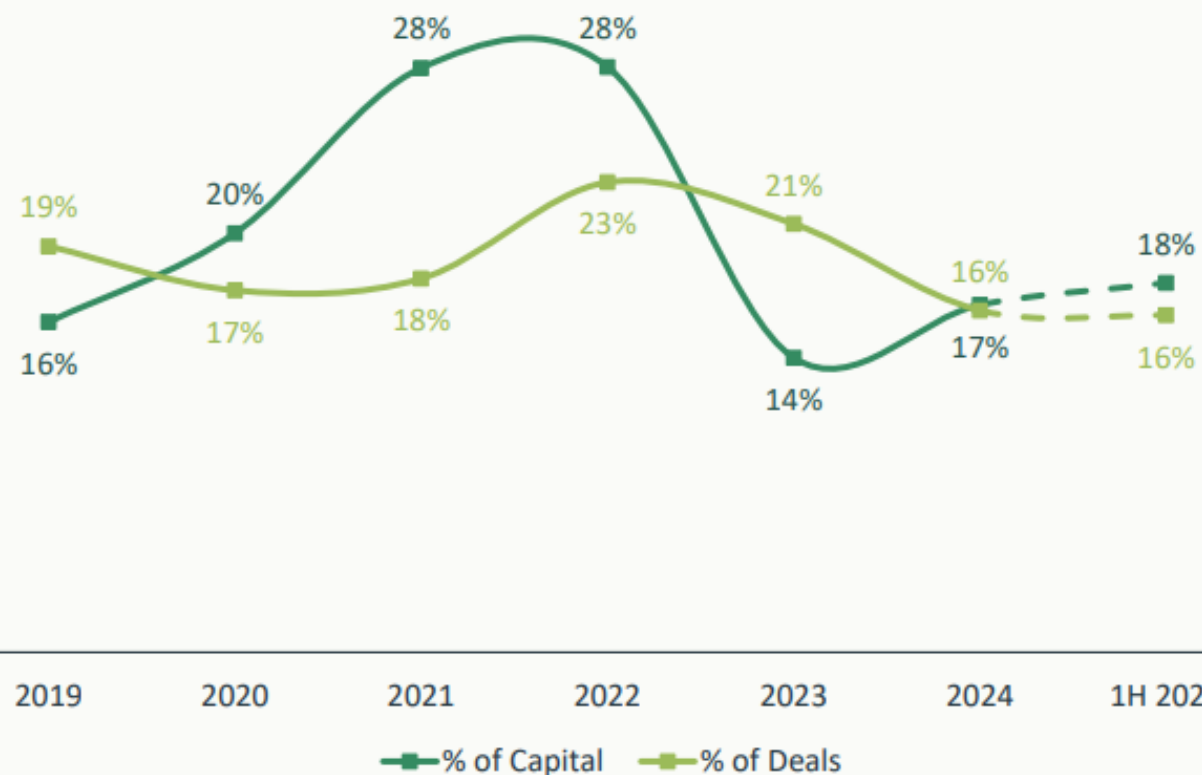
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Female (co-)founded VC capital %

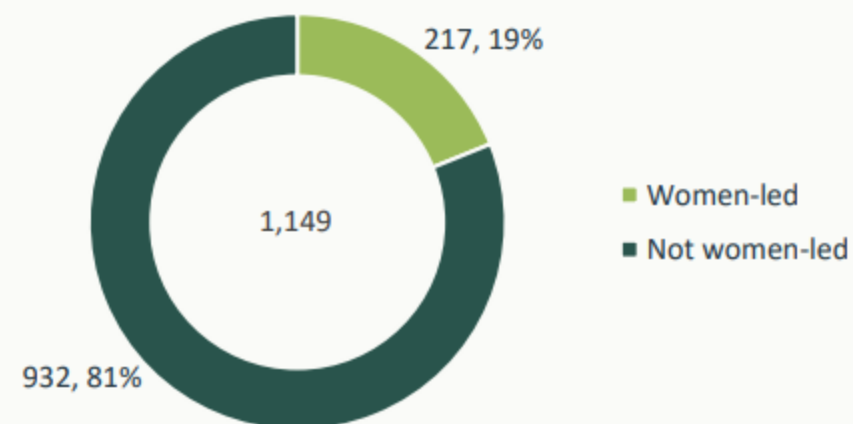


... and in Latin American and the Caribbean.

VC Investment in Latin America for Women-Led Startups*, 2019-1H 2025



Startups* in Latin America by Gender Diversity (No. of Startups), 2019-1H 2025



VC Gender Diversity in Latin America in Numbers

338

Rounds raised by women-led startups* since 2019

USD9.3b

Total capital raised by women-led startups* since 2019

Source: LAVCA. Data as of 30 June 2025. *Startups with disclosed investments over USD1m. Women-led startups include VC-backed companies with a female CEO and/or co-founder.

1

Financing The Next VC-Backed Startup: The Role of Gender

by Camille Hebert, Heather Tookes, and Emmanuel Yimfor

Empirical design

- The paper compares funding for next VC-backed startups of men and women who co-founded the same startup.

Main results

- The study identifies a gender gap in VC funding
 - Extensive margin: lower likelihood of founding another company.
 - Intensive margin: lower capital raised in subsequent firms.
 - Even after successful first experience. This is important and can account for an important part of the financing gap.
- Asymmetric spillovers:
 - Investors who financed a women co-founded start up that fails have lower probability of financing other women founded startups. No positive effect if the women co-founded start up succeeded.
- The analysis of drivers concludes that the gap is not due to the demand side (founders' preferences or quality), but to unequal and biased treatment by investors (supply side).

1

Financing The Next VC-Backed Startup: The Role of Gender

by Camille Hebert, Heather Tookes, and Emmanuel Yimfor

Discussion

1. Given that the main problem is related to investors' bias and not to a lack of good quality women founded firms, ***policies should go beyond the support to women-own business.***
 - These policies could change the market outcome but (given that do not solve the root cause of the problem) they need continuous intervention.
2. Key question: ***How to reduce the bias of investors?***
 - Not easy.
 - If the bias is unconscious, make people aware of the bias and training. (e.g. bias reduction in banks' credit officers)
 - Other behavioral interventions (Next paper)

2

Social Image, Organizational Values and Inclusion: Evidence from a Field Experiment by Girum Abebe, Siân Brooke, Tom Gole, Simon Quinn, and Tom Schwantje

Empirical design

Business plan competition in which judges receive three possible “treatments”: (i) judges are reminded of the organization’s commitment to gender equality, (ii) judges must justify their decisions to peers, (iii) both.

Main results

- Highlighting organizational values promoting gender equality increased the likelihood that high-quality female entrepreneurs were selected for funding.
- Social image concerns—requiring judges to justify their decisions to peers—did not improve women’s success but enhanced agreement among judges (even without communication).
- The combined treatment attenuated both effects.
- These findings suggest that simple institutional nudges promoting equal opportunity can enhance the quality of evaluative decisions and improve outcomes for high-potential female applicants.

2

Social Image, Organisational Values and Inclusion: Evidence from a Field Experiment by Girum Abebe, Siân Brooke, Tom Gole, Simon Quinn, and Tom Schwantje

Discussion

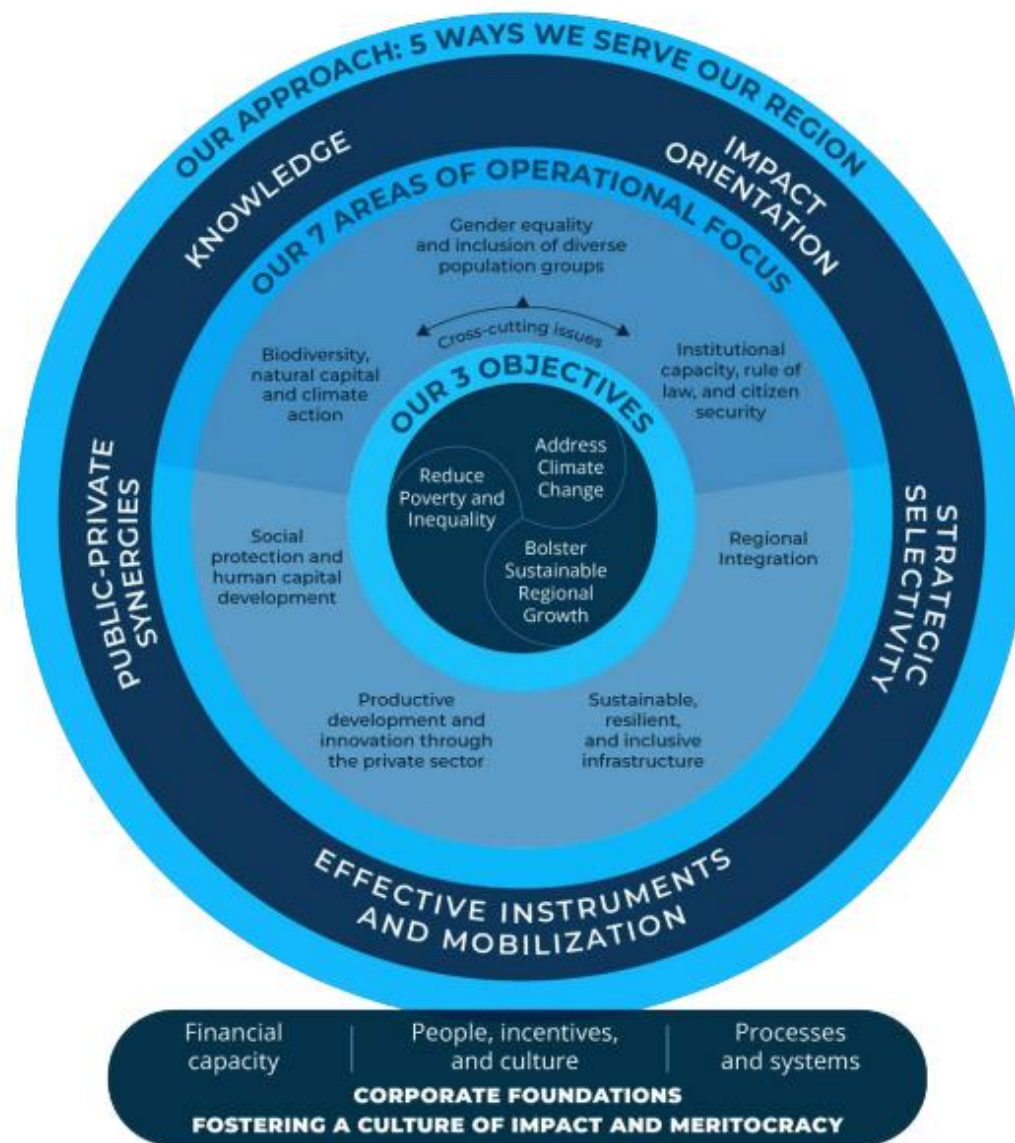
1. Relatively simple solution that aims at tackling the **root cause of the problem**, and in principle could be tested in other environments.
2. How much does it depend on the **culture of the organization**?
3. Would it be effective after **repeated applications**?
4. The **type of message** is important. If the objective is to reduce bias, it would be interesting to compare:
 - Message about the organization's gender equality values
 - Message about fairness and the importance of meritocracy

→ Our Institutional Strategy at a Glance

OUR 3 OBJECTIVES

Three mutually reinforcing objectives are at the core of the Institutional Strategy, driving action across the full range of our development projects.

- 1 Reduce Poverty and Inequality:** We are devoted to eradicating extreme poverty and investing in human capital – from education to food security and health to gender equality.
- 2 Address Climate Change:** We are dedicated to combating and adapting to climate change, including by safeguarding the Amazon, curbing emissions and preserving biodiversity, while strengthening resilience.
- 3 Bolster Sustainable Regional Growth:** We are committed to increasing the region's long-term growth, including by investing in infrastructure, empowering the private sector to drive productivity and innovation, and enhancing regional integration.



\$100 billion

MSME financing gap in LAC

IDB Invest works with **financial institutions** across the region to expand financing opportunities for women.

From 2026-2024

44
operations

20
countries

1.4
million
women-led MSMEs
access the credit



Gender Equality and Inclusion of Diverse Population Groups

BOOSTING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

IDB Invest and IDB Lab support Banco ADOPEM to **enhance financing and skills development for women-led MSMEs**



A 20-year history of collaboration:

- 2004** IDB Lab supports the transformation of ADOPEM from an NGO into a regulated bank.
- 2014** IDB Lab launches project to support women microfranchisees
- 2022** *Crece con ADOPEM* digital skills platform launched with IDB Lab support.
- 2024** 2,500 women entrepreneurs enrolled in the *Crece con ADOPEM* platform

- 800 using digital payments
- 1,200 using digital technologies

ADOPEM issues its first **outcome-based social bond** with IDB Invest support





THANK YOU

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