



# RURAL OPPORTUNITIES FUND

STRENGTHENING  
OUR COMMUNITIES

## REGIONAL RELIEF AND RECOVERY COVID-19

### FINAL REPORT

Dated: June 30, 2021

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## Summary

On June 12, 2020, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) announced funding for regional relief and recovery related to COVID-19 in the amount \$1.526 million. This Rural Opportunities Fund (ROF) was made available to help Community Futures (CF) offices develop and implement local solutions to community challenges related to COVID-19 relief.

## Project Activities

CF Pan West Network experienced a strong and immediate response to the release of the COVID-19 ROF. We received 13 applications and held 7 adjudication committee meetings. The meetings took place on June 4, August 13, September 10, October 2, October 29, and November 19 of 2020, and on January 21 of 2021. The committee approved 12 applications and deemed 1 ineligible. Applications to the ROF for COVID-19 relief and recovery ended on March 31, 2021. A summary of the 12 projects completed with support from this fund are detailed in this report.

## Benefits Resulting from the Rural Opportunities Fund

In the face of the significant challenges that COVID-19 presented, the training, coaching, and support for pivoting business projects made possible by this fund provided a valuable resource to communities. Many of the projects supported by this fund relied on in-depth expertise, referrals, and training to help the small businesses in their community survive, recover, and pivot. The training and programs received an overwhelmingly positive response. The success of the projects this past year was due in a large part to the partnerships CF offices built. These partnerships helped to promote the projects, but they also enabled CF offices to learn new strategies and access new opportunities. This helped many small businesses recover.

Many of the projects were directed at creating e-commerce platforms. These e-commerce platforms supported marketplaces where businesses could sell their local products and services online. This made it easier for customers to purchase and for sellers to continue operating their businesses during these unprecedented times. Before COVID -19, shoppers were already moving to online platforms. The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the need for this service. Businesses had to find ways to continue selling and promoting their products and services during lockdowns, slowdowns, and other restrictions. Vendors were provided essential training and support to get their businesses online, and to advertise their products and services on the e-commerce platforms. The response from customers was overwhelmingly positive. Vendors were able to pivot at least part of their business model away from in-store sales and this allowed them to continue operating their business during the pandemic. The partnerships formed as part of this helped promote small businesses, and gave them the encouragement and support they needed to move through the pandemic challenges on the road to recovery.

## Performance Indicators Chart

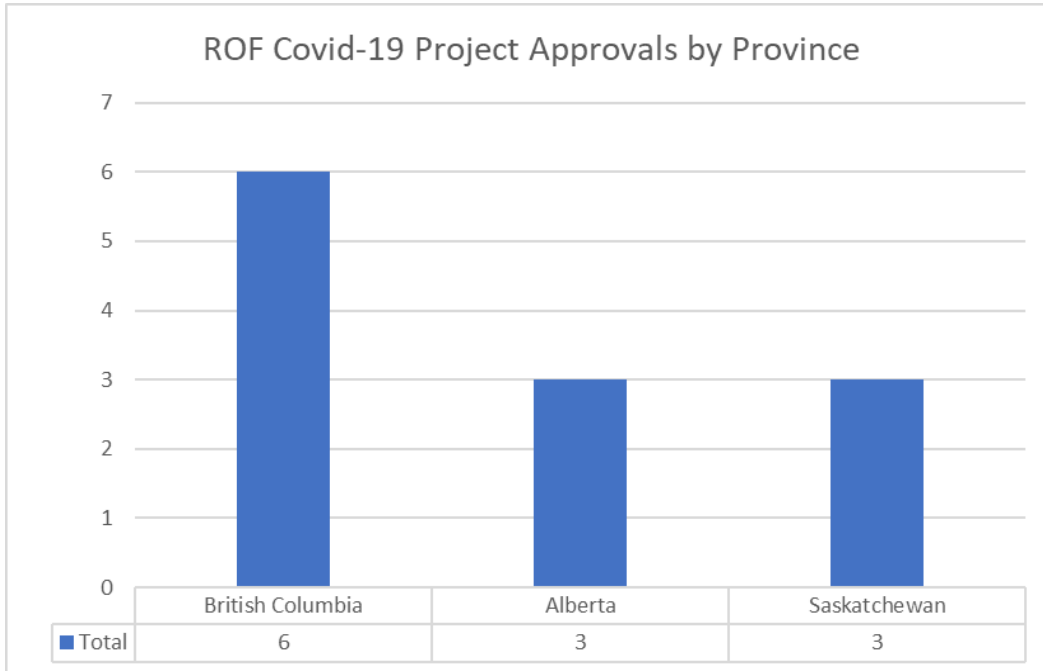
The following chart measures the outcomes and success of the projects as required by the agreement made in June 2020.

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	75	3307
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	75	1725
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	20	625
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	20	218
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	14	90
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	10	58
Number and type of community-based projects funded – see profiles below	20	12
Number of non-highly-qualified-personnel (non-HQP) jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	15	110
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	4	53
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	4	15
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Indigenous	3	3
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	1	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	100	2334
Number of participants trained	50	1687
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	25	181
Value and type of community-based projects (target 1,526,000 x 3.4)	5,188,400.00	2,730,273.00
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	10	14
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	20	55
Number of co-operatives assisted	2	13

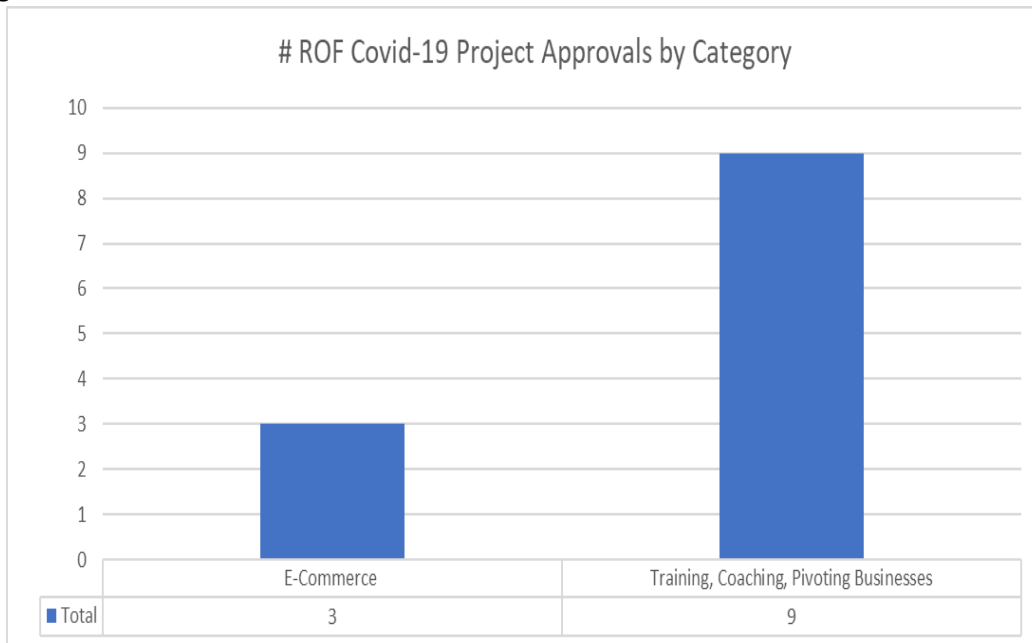
## Report Profiles

The following tables present data for the projects supported by the COVID-19 ROF. The data is broken down by category, dollar amounts, and approved projects.

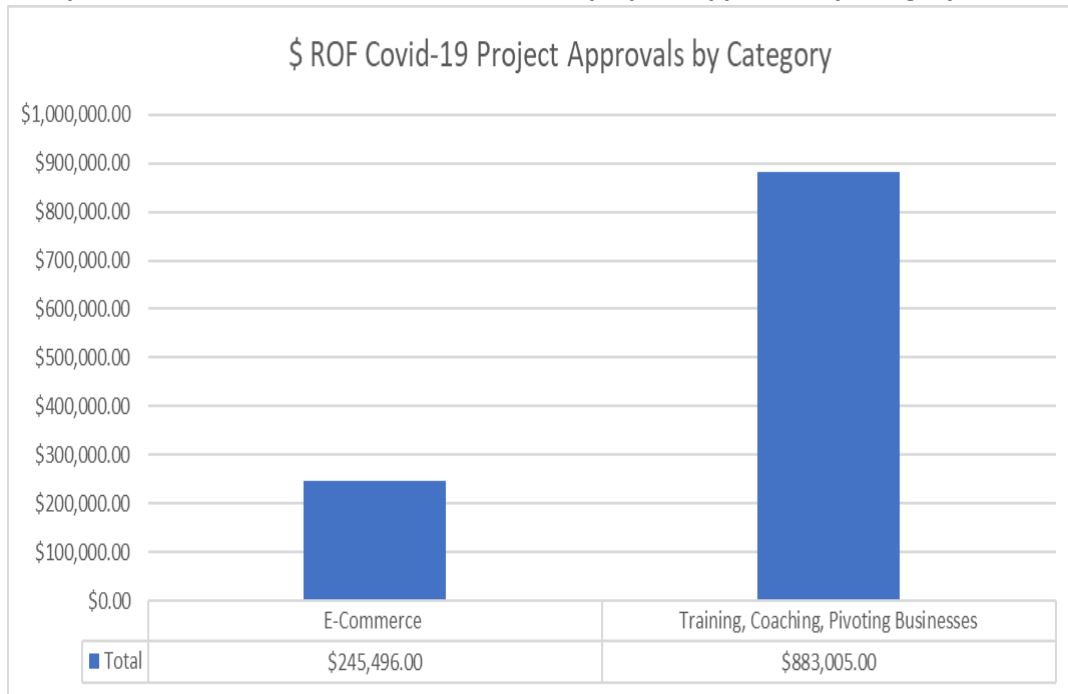
**Table 1 – Represents the number of ROF COVID-19 project approvals by province.**



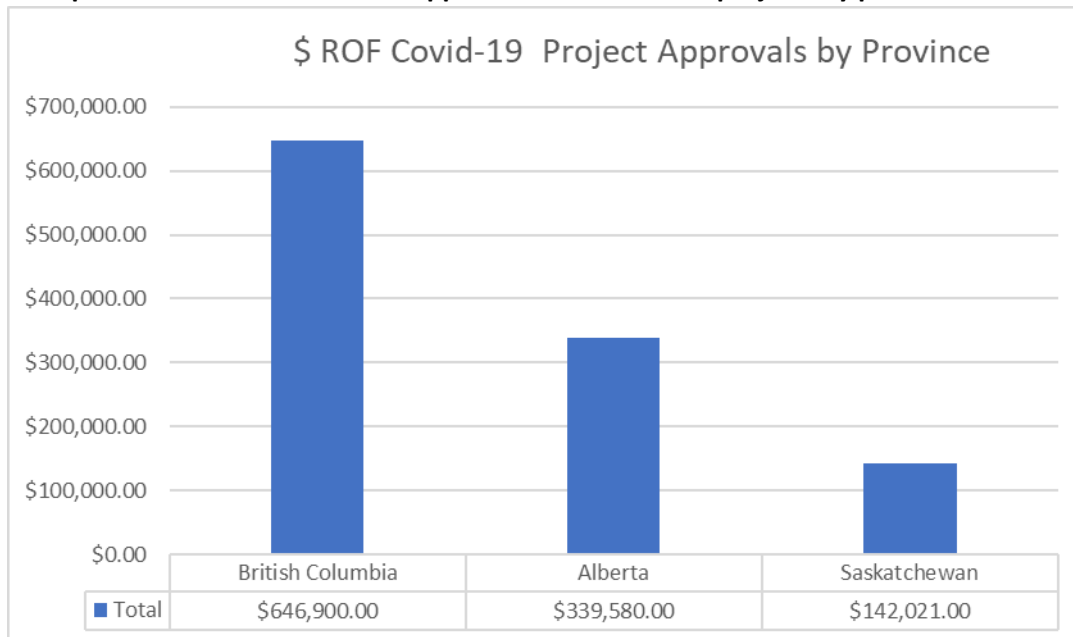
**Table 2 – Represents the total number of ROF COVID-19 project approvals by project category grouping.**



**Table 3 – Represents the dollar value of ROF COVID-19 projects approved by category to date.**



**Table 4 – Represents the dollar value of approved ROF COVID-19 projects by province.**



## Regional Relief and Recovery COVID-19 CF Projects Summary

The following provides summaries for each approved project, including the targets reported to March 31, 2021.

### 12 APPROVED PROJECTS

#### CF Port Alberni Clayoquot, British Columbia

Project Name: Holistic Economic Development Plan

Approval Date: June 2020

Amount: \$254,000.00

Project Description: The Holistic Economic Development Plan was developed to address needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the pandemic presented an unprecedented economic challenge for society in general, it was particularly damaging to small and medium sized business owners. This project provided support, training, ideas, and resources to strengthen and pivot businesses to more sustainable long-term business models. Loans were offered through CF. Training and coaching was provided to help businesses develop and implement new plans during these challenging times.

Start / End Date: July 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: This project gave business owners support from a group of consultants with a wide array of knowledge and skills. The consultants offered three levels of support: (1) general information and support, (2) expert guidance through decisions that could result in significant change to a person's life and/or business, (3) expert mediation services and follow-through during business closure or sale. CF offices throughout the province of BC accessed the services provided through this project on behalf of businesses within their region. The project was well received throughout the province and resulted in many new partnerships. CF Port Alberni Clayoquot exceeded the majority of the key performance targets set in their agreement for this project. There was an exceptionally high level of participation up until the end of the project ([www.theconsultinghive.ca](http://www.theconsultinghive.ca)).

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	800	1087
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	100	197
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	40	30
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	10	9
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	4	4
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	4	2
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	60	106
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	32	53
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	16	15

Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Indigenous	6	2
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	4	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	0	184
Number of participants trained	1100	0*
Number or partners engaged in community-based projects	7	0
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	2	2
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	3	2

\* Due to COVID-19, training was more difficult and the CF Port Alberni Clayoquot office responded to the needs of the businesses individually. Further training is planned after the end-date of the project. The project has other funds to continue past March 31,2021.

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### CF Highwood, Alberta

Project Name: Business Recovery and Retention

Approval Date: June 2020

Amount: \$120,000.00

Project Description: The Business Recovery and Retention project was created as a direct response to the impact of COVID-19 on the many small and medium sized business owners in this region. This project was a collaboration between three CF offices, many local stakeholders, and a specially created task force. The goal was to provide much needed mental health, educational, and coaching support to aid the recovery needs of the affected business owners. The project consisted of three main components that were delivered in a fluent and not necessarily sequential format: mental health, education, and coaching.

Start / End Date: June 18, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: There was a strong and immediate response to the release of the training and the project. The group coaching sessions were received well, with a consistent increase in enrollment throughout the year. Marketing efforts were diverse and effective. This included emails to clients, business contacts, and community partners who distributed the emails to their clients. The project coordinator worked with some of the rural clients who were unfamiliar with video technology. This helped to ensure that the project was inclusive and supported every business interested in participating. CF Highwood exceeded almost all of their targeted key performance indicators and helped many businesses.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	270	346
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	70	271
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	50	177

Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	4	8
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	4	15
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	10	36
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	2	32
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	0	588
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	20	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	4	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Indigenous	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	4	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – New Canadian	1	0
Number of participants trained	350	419
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	15	50
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	0	3
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	3	32
Number of co-operatives assisted	0	8

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### CF Yellowhead East, Alberta

Project Name: COVID-19 Business Viability and Strategic Pivoting

Approval date: August 2020

Amount: \$61,580.00

Project Description: CF and its partners completed a deep assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on the labour force, and the needs of employers and employees. Small and medium sized business owners, employees, training providers, post-secondary institutions, and various organizations in the region participated in the assessment. This project used the information from the assessment to provide retention strategies, pivoting support, and assistance to businesses in the region. It will also support post-COVID-19 business viability and business restructuring. The quantitative and qualitative data included in the assessment helped the region determine the best approach for ensuring that labour force retention strategies and small business retention strategies align.

Start / End Date: September 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: This project allowed for a coordinated response in providing immediate supports to businesses. The project included a series of workshops, as well as one-on-one coaching to help small businesses remain resilient and sustainable during the recovery period. Workshops ran from January to March via Zoom. Project coordinators conducted business surveys and analyses through virtual interviews. They reached out to over 400 businesses, gaining valuable feedback for future support for recovery. In providing these additional services and supports, they also raised awareness of CF in the region. More business owners now know that they can continue to reach out to the CF office for information and support. This project hit almost all of their key performance targets and



gathered valuable information that will help them move forward as they continue to recover from the pandemic.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	100	151
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	100	151
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	30	46
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	30	4
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	5	3
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	5	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	5	5
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	200	151
Number of participants trained	200	42
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	20	60
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	3	1
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	5	1

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**CF South Fraser, British Columbia**

Project Name: Local Business Restart Project

Approval date: August 2020

Amount: \$120,000.00

Project Description: The Local Business Restart Project was created as a direct response to the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on small and medium sized businesses. It was a collaboration between CF South Fraser, STÓ:LŌ Community Futures, Chilliwack Economic Recovery Network, and Abbotsford Business Community Coalition. The Chilliwack Economic Recovery Network and Abbotsford Business Community Coalition were created at the beginning of the economic shutdown to support local businesses in the recovery phase. The project provided much needed support for workforce development in several areas including financial impact strategies, e-commerce strategies, and marketing strategies. This helped businesses to pivot their operations or enhance their current offerings so that they could re-open and maintain operation within the community. The project was delivered online with a focus on mental health, education, and coaching.

Start / End Date: August 15, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: The impact of this project was significant with 175 participants registered and 640 advisory hours given to small and medium sized businesses. Businesses received strategic guidance and direction, branding and marketing design support, content planning, campaign development, website and e-commerce support, set up of their financial planning cash flow, and social media support. The businesses that invested time and energy into learning and growing moved their operations forward in less time. They implemented what they learned, thereby strengthening the sustainability and longevity of their businesses. The facilitators and the participants formed a close

network of people who want nothing more than to support and elevate one another. This project exceeded almost all of their key performance targets and in some cases they tripled the predicted numbers. A legacy project has been created and scheduled for mid-May 2021. In this new project, 10 participants will share on video the positive impact the Local Business Restart Project had on them and their business.

**Targets Reported to Date:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Targeted</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	55	156
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	40	156
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	5	130
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	3	11
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	4	9
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	0	5
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	10	4
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	40	170
Number of participants trained	65	175
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	10	16
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	0	4

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**CF Central Island, British Columbia**

Project Name: Survive to Thrive

Approval date: September 2020

Amount: \$79,700.00

Project Description: This project supported enterprises, regardless of their incorporation designation. It helped them navigate the financial and operational implications along the road to recovery post-COVID-19. Survive and Thrive combined group coaching, individualized support, peer support, and timely webinars to provide financial tools, scenario thinking tools, resources, and information. Scale Collaborative (Victoria, BC) rolled out the online training and delivered the pod/individual coaching sessions using their group of qualified coaches. There are 6 CFs participating in this initiative.

Start / End Date: October 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: Originally, this project was designed for 80 participants to participate in 4 workshops and pod coaching. However, when only 15 people signed up, the team redeployed the program into individual sessions. To expand its reach, they renamed the program Survive and Recover, and they revamped the marketing tools. They decided that instead of holding 2 cohorts over 6 months, they would take applications on a continual basis. Then, after they reached 12 to 15 applicants, they would launch another cohort. The majority of the training was held in the second quarter of the project. Although this project was below its predicted key performance indicators, it was still well received and the numbers are reflected below. The biggest take away from this project was the

overwhelming agreement that businesses need a strategic plan. Overall, the program was well received, and all of the coaches received positive feedback.

Targets Reported to Date:

<b>Description</b>	<b>Targeted</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	80	110
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	80	110
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	35	65
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	5	12
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	2	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	2	6
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	2	2
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	5	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	1	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	120	588
Number of participants trained	80	128
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	13	13
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	2	1
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	2	3
Number of co-operatives assisted	4	1

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**CF Cowichan, British Columbia**

Project Name: Social Distancing Solutions for Winter

Approval date: October 2020

Amount: \$42,130.00

Project Description: This project's initiatives were aimed at sustaining customer demand and finding solutions for social distancing protocols in the winter months. The winter months made it harder for customer service businesses to offer solutions to social distancing that were easier to accommodate during the summer. The intent of the project was to expand the use of new technologies by owners, and to support the adoption and use of an app called WAIT specifically geared to the region.

Start / End Date: October 29, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: There was very little uptake from businesses despite strong support for the project in the early fall. In follow-up discussions, project organizers learned that three major factors contributed to the less than strong support: (1) At project launch, BC was in the second wave of COVID-19 and returning to much tighter restrictions, so less people were out and there were fewer line-ups, (2) Because they wanted to completed their Christmas shopping before restrictions increased, many people did their shopping early

in October and November, which was before to project launch, and (3) Small business owners in the area resisted adopting new technology (this is probably the biggest reason). To address the resistance to adopting technology, the project coordinators hired a contractor as the Project's Client Sales and Support Coordinator. The mandate of this position was to identify suitable businesses, and make them aware of the project and the WAIT technology. Although the uptake for this project was disappointing, the CF office hopes that the app will gain more acceptance later this year.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium size business owners assisted	150	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	150	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	75	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	10	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	2	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	2	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	3	1
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	25	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	5	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	5	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Indigenous	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – New Canadian	2	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	75	0
Number of participants trained	150	2
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	3	6
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	2	0
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	2	1
Number of co-operatives assisted	2	0

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**CF Ventures, Saskatchewan**

Project Name: Support for COVID-19 Adaptability and Recovery

Approval date: October 2020

Amount: \$54,525.00

Project Description: SCAR is a series of webinars aimed at educating business owners on how to overcome the obstacles they faced as a result of COVID-19. The webinars were hosted by several speakers and covered topics such as leadership, mental health, wellness education, crisis planning, financial strategy, business restructuring, operating a business during uncertain times, cash flow management, website creation, moving your business online, selling products online, online marketing, social media for business, and software programs for beginners.

Start / End Date: October 29, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to Date: Upon approval of this project, a full event calendar was set up. Events were promoted and registrations continued to increase as courses were released. Partners were engaged and the project progressed according to plan. In addition to the partners listed in the original agreement, 12 more partners signed up and promoted the project. The project received greater interest and significantly more registrations than expected. They had to increase the number of participants and add additional training sessions. The project exceeded just about every key performance indicator they had predicted and more. This project was well received and they had an overwhelming participation in the training offered. Some of the training has been recorded and uploaded to the CF Ventures YouTube Channel.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	340	440
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	340	440
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	34	20
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	10	169
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	34	49
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	7	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	17	5
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	340	440
Number of participants trained	340	440
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	15	15
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	10	2
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	17	2
Number of co-operatives assisted	0	4

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### CF South Central, Saskatchewan

Project Name: Virtual Moose Jaw Marketplace

Approval date: October 2020

Amount: \$62,000.00

Project Description: CF South Central, Moose Jaw and District Chamber of Commerce, WOW Factor Media, and the City of Moose Jaw partnered to develop the Virtual Moose Jaw Marketplace. The hyper-local marketplace supported the retail and service sectors in the region. It allowed them to sell online with ease of use for both buyers and sellers. The partners in this project worked together to provide outreach and to host online orientations for businesses owners. The marketplace was a truly collaborative effort that helped local businesses through challenging times.

Start / End Date: October 2, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to date: At the start of this project, approximately 469 businesses were contacted and given information about the release of the digital platform. The project had a strong initial uptake with 62 vendors registering their business. The vendors sold their products and services online using the platform. As the year progressed, other businesses registered. By the end of the project, 87 businesses registered for the project. Organizers will continue to engage businesses, set up of the platform, and provide training beyond the end date of this project. The project easily met and exceeded their initially estimated key performance targets and the project will continue to benefit this region.

**Targets Reported to Date:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Targeted</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	60	87
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	50	87
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	30	61
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	10	11
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	2	2
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	2	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	6	6
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	72	200
Number of participants trained	50	87
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	4	12
Number of new Canadian clients assisted	6	6

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**CF Fraser Fort George, British Columbia**

Project Name: Supporting Northern BC Clients through COVID

Approval date: October 2020

Amount: \$124,350.00

Project Description: The COVID situation in northern BC is compounded due to back-to-back economic crises, including wildfires and mill closures. Many entrepreneurs were already struggling to recover, or find new businesses and creative opportunities when COVID-19 started. This project addressed three immediate responses: the Pan-Northern Asset Mapping and Market Analyses, Welcome to the Digital Economy Workshops, and trauma informed training for CF staff supporting clients through COVID.

Start / End Date: November 3, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to date: Three consultants for the Pan-Northern Asset Mapping and Market Analyses completed and presented reports to 9 Northern BC managers on March 30, 2021. They focused on asset mapping in two industries and market analysis in a third: (1) light manufacturing and small-scale automation, (2) the digital economy, and (3) the cottage industry with a primary focus on high-end artisans. Some of the recommendations from the three studies can be implemented without a lot of resources and will have an immediate impact, but other recommendations will take more time. The Welcome to the Digital Economy Workshops for entrepreneurs and the trauma training for CF staff were well received and engagement was high. CF staff benefited from the trauma training. They

are now trained to recognize and support entrepreneurs who have been impacted by trauma. Testimonials confirm the positive legacy of this training. It's available to all CF offices and can be accessed on the SharePoint site for new hires and skill development.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	78	767**
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	60	190
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	5	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	30	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	7	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	1	0
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	1	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	20	0
Number of participants trained	63	270*

\*\* CF offices in the North connected with 767 businesses.

\* 190 businesses received the digital training for entrepreneurs and 80 staff received the trauma training.

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#### CF St Paul Smoky Lake Region, Alberta

Project Name: Marketplace Project

Approval date: November 2020

Amount: \$158,000.00

Project Description: This online project enhanced the shop local concept by enabling the region to set up a platform for Alberta-made products, stores, and entrepreneurs. The platform lets businesses sell their products and services in a bilingual format (English, French). It is a large marketplace platform similar to Amazon. Entrepreneurs can list their products on the platform and sell directly to customers. An administrator trained each business that participated in how to take photographs and list their products or services. Rather than having to sell products and services on their own websites, entrepreneurs can now use this platform.

Start / End Date: November 19, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to date: The project was branded as the Alberta iMarket. By the midpoint of the project, it was gaining momentum, with 22 vendors signed up and 41 staff members trained. The marketing campaign rolled out in the last quarter and there were exponential increases in businesses signing up after that. The number of businesses assisted and participants trained is expected to grow as businesses continue to register after the end date of this project ([www.albertaimarket.com](http://www.albertaimarket.com)).

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	200	112
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	75	107
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	32	88
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	5	4
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	12	4
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	4	3
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	3	
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	53	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Women	22	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Youth	3	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Indigenous	5	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – Persons with disability	2	0
Number of non-HQP jobs created to date (as direct result of the project) – New Canadian	1	0
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	53	3
Number of participants trained	247	84
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	8	7
Number of Francophone entrepreneurs assisted	32	5
Number of New Canadian clients assisted	4	0
Number of co-operatives assisted	2	0

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**CF Development Corporation Sunshine Coast, British Columbia**

Project Name: COVID-19 Succession & Exit Strategies for Local Business (Pilot Project)

Approval date: November 2020

Amount: \$26,720.00

Project Description: This project provided urgent and immediate support to businesses in the region. Business in the area were given access to consultants who helped them build their exit or succession plans while they continued to work their owner-operated shops.

Start / End Date: November 19, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to date: A project lead and 4 business consultants were recruited and oriented, and the paperwork was completed. The project was promoted well. Organizers vetted and matched 6 businesses with consultants. At the end of the project, 4 of the 6 businesses were actively listed for sale, and there were 4 potential buyers aged 40 to 55 (3 females and 1 male). The project was well received and CF plans to run another pilot with Venture Connect in the future. There was only one predicted key performance indicator and they exceeded it by one when they helped an additional business.



Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	5	6
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	0	16

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**CF Southwest, Saskatchewan**

Project Name: E-Commerce Shop Local Website

Approval date: January 2021

Amount: \$25,496.00

Project Description: The E-Commerce Shop Local Website took the strategies used by the Virtual Moose Jaw Marketplace and looked for ways of enhancing them. The website provided a digital solution that helped businesses generate more revenue so they could pay their bills and stay open. The online marketplace is a collaborative way of allowing businesses to continue operating during these challenging times and to position themselves for future growth.

Start / End Date: January 21, 2021 – March 31, 2021

Project Activities to date: This project was approved in late January and CF moved quickly to get the project going. They contacted approximately 200 businesses and gave them information on the digital platform. The key performance indicators reported at this time are low, but this project had additional funds to continue past the end date. The marketing and training will continue and they expect to achieve higher numbers in their targets.

Targets Reported to Date:

Description	Targeted	Actual
Number of small and medium sized business owners assisted	200	50
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – TOTAL	100	15
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Women	85	8
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Youth	5	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Indigenous	2	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – Persons with disability	2	1
Number of businesses created, maintained, or expanded – New Canadian	6	4
Number of jobs maintained to date (as direct result of the project) – TOTAL	100	10
Number of participants trained	200	40
Number of partners engaged in community-based projects	3	2
Number of new Canadians assisted	6	4