



FUELING WHAT MATTERS

A national conversation with women business leaders on energy, the economy, and powering Canada's future opportunities



2026 edition

A Canada Powered by Women national report, in partnership with PwC Canada

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“ PwC Canada and Canada Powered by Women are proud to have partnered with organizations across the energy value chain and ecosystem to foster dialogue and action.

The intersection of energy, economic resilience, and policy is a ‘now’ issue across Canada. One that’s now critical as we look to safely power our homes, our communities, our industries, and our economy.

Women are right in the middle of this equation, showing what’s possible and what we can achieve as a nation when we work together to make the most of our energy and natural resources.

We partnered to launch and host the inaugural **Fueling What Matters** roundtable series with women executives from across the country who are focused on the opportunity Canada has right now to take control of our future through the responsible development of our natural resources coast-to-coast. These are women in leadership positions who have vision and influence; we wanted to better understand from their perspective what’s working in the energy and natural resources sector and what needs to change so we, as a nation, can build the right infrastructure to fuel what matters in the years ahead.

Ambition needs to be paired with action, to build and ensure prosperity for our Country – action that includes developing foundational and sound energy policy that supports outcomes that impact women’s lives. In this report, we share what we heard from woman executives, along with calls to action to help policymakers turn Canada’s ambition into valuable, lasting outcomes. ”

Kirsten Baker
Partner, National Energy Leader, PwC Canada

Tracey Bodnarchuk
CEO, Canada Powered by Women



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In spring 2026, Canada Powered by Women (CPW) and PwC Canada brought together senior women executives from across the energy sector and adjacent industry sectors for **Fueling What Matters**: a national roundtable series aimed at sparking discussions around energy, the economy, and how best to power Canada’s future opportunities and prosperity.

These gatherings, held in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver between **February and April 2026**, were intimate and highly targeted to allow for meaningful discussion and candid conversation. They involved women already in the mindset of getting things done. Leaders in positions of influence and authority, who are making decisions, deploying capital, building projects and supporting infrastructure, and hiring the workforce that will define Canada’s next economic chapter. PwC partners took part in each roundtable, alongside women from energy and energy-adjacent sectors.

The mood during these conversations was unmistakable: cautiously optimistic, but impatient. Participants spoke of unprecedented global demand for Canadian resources and energy—from oil and natural gas to nuclear and hydroelectricity—and shared insights into regional nuances and experiences. They were energized by growing public support for natural resource development and by the tangible shift in the national conversation towards making the most of what we have. As one Vancouver participant put it, “We’re a resource country. Let’s embrace it. Let’s be proud.”

But roundtable participants didn’t downplay the challenges that come with seizing the moment. In particular, they shared how Canada’s complex energy and environmental policy landscape hinders growth and makes timely execution difficult. “We’re so good at innovating in Canada, but we’re really bad at scaling that innovation,” one Edmonton leader explained. In Calgary, one participant put it more bluntly: “With uncertainty, capital just sits on the sidelines.”

The overall message from our roundtables was clear: **Women executives don’t want more ambition. They want greater clarity, coordination, and action.**

What we heard — four key insights



It’s time to move from energy ambition to energy execution



Partnerships and collaboration are working—now they need a common language to define success



Workforce constraints are an employment opportunity of a lifetime



Canada needs a stronger economic narrative for energy and energy-adjacent sectors

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE SERIES

The purpose

The *Fueling What Matters* national roundtable series was conducted to elevate the voices of executive women at the heart of Canada’s energy sector. Engaged women¹ who understand today’s operational realities, from the policy conditions needed to support growth and turn opportunities into action, to the connections between energy policy and household affordability. Women who will be leading both strategy and execution, who are already on to the ‘how’ we’re going to do it.

The participants

Calgary	10 participants	Edmonton	14 participants
11 distinct organizations		13 distinct organizations	
Industry sectors		Industry sectors	
Energy, Utilities, Government, Regulators, Non-Profit, Finance		Capital Markets, Utilities, Energy, Health, Non-Profit, Regulatory, Retail, Business Consulting, Professional Services (Communications, Marketing & PR)	
Vancouver	13 participants	Toronto	14 participants
15 distinct organizations		7 distinct organizations	
Industry sectors		Industry sectors	
Mining, LNG, Energy, Utilities, Shipping, Forestry, Legal		Automotive, Utilities, Regulatory, Energy, Nuclear and Industry Association.	

The data foundation

Roundtable discussions were informed by the results of the [CPW 2026 National Survey](#) (Canada Powered by Women, 2026)—conducted in partnership with Léger—and PwC’s [29th Global CEO Survey](#) (PwC Canada, 2026). Together, these surveys show women and business leaders converging on the need for pragmatic, regionally grounded energy and economic policy tied to tangible outcomes: jobs, affordability, and stability.

¹ Engaged women are well informed. They take in the news, understand the connection between the economy and energy, and want a voice in the conversation. They are interested in learning more and about how they can support dialogue about issues facing Canadians, including wealth and prosperity.

WHAT WE HEARD: FOUR KEY INSIGHTS



Insight 1: It's time to move from energy ambition to energy execution

Underpinning every roundtable discussion was an honest theme: doubt. Participants expressed a lack of confidence that Canada can do what needs to be done to achieve its grand ambitions: the mandates, the workforce requirements, the partnerships, the major infrastructure projects needed to unlock growth, and everything in between. This mirrored the results of the CPW 2026 National Survey, which found that only 23% of engaged women have confidence in Canada's ability to get large energy projects approved and built.

While they shared a sense of optimism and ambition, and were well-aligned on what needs to be done to succeed, roundtable participants were quick to table their main question—how?

In Toronto, one participant spoke about 'no regrets decisions,' the need to be responsive to growing energy demands and clear with decision making, and the steps that must be taken to support execution—including Indigenous consultation and economic participation right from the start. This was echoed in Vancouver, along with the need to streamline permitting and regulation given how much they affect both energy and mining development.



86% of engaged women agree that the ability to attract capital should be a key element of energy policy, while 68% said decisive actions by Government lead to confidence in our economic future. [CPW 2026 National Survey](#) (Canada Powered by Women, 2026)

Calls to action for policymakers

Commit to developing clear and enduring policies that take into account regional differences and needs, support economic growth, and attract capital.

Make an effort to bring Canada's talented women executives into energy, environmental, and economic policy conversations; ask them to be on committees, to take part in briefings, and to join working groups tasked with designing reforms, major project mandates, and delivery models.



Insight 2: Partnerships and collaboration are working—now they need a common language to define success

Roundtable participants suggested that partnership models are already working. One specific example discussed was a collaborative working group being led by a utility regulator, with multiple sectors participating, including automotive, to actively engage and contribute to demand growth and system planning.



56% of Canadian CEOs are competing in new sectors, with over 40% expanding into energy, utilities, and resources adjacencies. *PwC Global CEO Survey—Canadian Insights* (PwC Canada, 2026)

Participants noted collaboration and communication between government and industry is also valuable for turning ambition into execution. But participants identified one pain point that often slows activities down: business and government rarely speak the same language. "Government speaks in policy. Business speaks in ROI," one Edmonton participant explained. A Toronto participant also suggested that capital is increasingly flowing to the U.S. as returns are higher and regulatory processes are more predictable – posing a risk to domestic infrastructure development. Participants further highlighted the importance of collaboration between governments—a fact that dovetails with the results of the CPW 2026 National Survey, which found that 86% of engaged women believe Canada’s policies need to be revised to make domestic trade between provinces and territories easier.

A common language is essential for forging partnerships that work for everyone involved, including the federal government, provincial and territorial governments, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and private business. It’s critical for creating buy-in, accelerating execution, breaking down trade barriers, and dealing with issues when they arise.

Calls to action for policymakers

Communicate using a shared language that is understood across the federal government, provincial and territorial governments, the private sector, Indigenous communities, and other relevant stakeholders.

Focus policy decisions at all levels on tangible, collaborative outcomes, such as jobs, growth and ROI.

Prioritize becoming a partnership accelerator by bringing policymakers and business teams together to align tax, permitting, and capital incentives so that Canada can compete.



Insight 3: Workforce constraints are an employment opportunity of a lifetime

During every roundtable, the workforce was discussed not as a problem to manage but as an incredible opportunity. One participant called it, “the employment opportunity of a lifetime—if we dismantle the barriers and present it that way.” The numbers mentioned were staggering: 100,000 skilled workers needed for nuclear projects alone, in addition to workers for parallel projects in transmission, LNG, mining, energy infrastructure, data infrastructure, and more.

These women executives grapple with these challenges every day: hiring skilled and specialized workers for projects, building camps, redesigning worksites, and keeping people once they arrive. A Toronto participant highlighted retention as a critical issue, noting, "We get them in, then they don't stay," while a Vancouver executives flagged interprovincial mobility barriers and a thin construction labour pool as a key challenge. It was noted that in some cases the timelines required to educate skilled workers have not been aligned with proposed project execution timelines, which could create delivery risks. Participants emphasized the need for coordinated workforce planning and training strategies to support future infrastructure development.



80% of engaged women believe a strong and growing energy sector supports economic stability by driving job creation, business investment and overall financial growth in Canada. [CPW 2026 National Survey](#) (Canada Powered by Women, 2026)

Canada is staring at a once-in-a-generation employment opportunity, with hundreds of thousands of well-paying jobs set to be created across the country in the coming years – if we prioritize building the skilled and specialized workforce that will be needed as current availability won’t meet demand. With the perceived trend that technological advancement is eroding youth and other employment, the energy sector offers a unique, enduring employment opportunity since it’s a hard asset, low obsolescence industry. We need to present this to Canadians as the unprecedented opportunity that it is, and build systems that allow and encourage women, young people, and those from Indigenous communities and other underrepresented groups to fully participate.

Calls to action for policymakers

Link skills funding directly to project development timelines so training matches demand.

Expand apprenticeship and trades pathways and embed them into earlier stages of the education system.

Communicate this nationally for what it is: the employment opportunity of a lifetime.



Insight 4: Canada needs a stronger economic narrative for energy and energy-adjacent sectors

Roundtable participants from across all four cities said that Canada is not clearly articulating the economic business case for growing the energy sector and adjacent industries, and that the cost is showing up in talent pipelines, investor confidence, and policy momentum.

One Calgary executive acknowledged that the energy sector "never did a great job of telling our story outside our borders," while a Toronto participant noted that "energy has been positioned as a sunset [industry], as a phase out...so it's not well branded." The consensus across the roundtables was that branding is an issue that needs to be addressed, with the focus coming as early as high school—as this is when career decisions begin.

The rebranding of mining to 'critical minerals' was repeatedly cited as a good playbook for other resource industries. For example, actively rebranding natural gas as a critical input for electrification as base load power—rather than as redundancy—and as a provider of the continuous energy needed to enable AI and Canada's role as an innovation leader. Or Canadian heavy oil as a key resource from a national security and defence perspective.

Canada's energy and natural resources are strategic national assets and the envy of the world—and should be communicated as such. Canada is uniquely positioned to meet global energy demand while creating urgently needed jobs, building the Canadian economy, supporting Indigenous economic participation, and fueling Canada's long-term prosperity. That is a story worth telling with pride.



85% of engaged women agree our natural resources give Canada a position of power in global trade while 73% agree that oil and gas contributes to a successful, growing, and prosperous economy. [*CPW 2026 National Survey*](#) (Canada Powered by Women, 2026)

Calls to action for policymakers

In communications and policy, reposition the oil and gas sector as the foundation of a reliable energy system. Emphasize the importance of the sector to the quality of life of Canadians, and its essential role in supporting national social programs

Invest in school-level engagement, and update energy related education curriculum, to rebuild the talent pipeline and rebrand energy careers for the next generation of workers.

Lead with pride and plain language—tell Canada's energy story with the decisiveness and confidence this moment requires.

CONCLUSION

The women business leaders we met with as part of our **Fueling What Matters** roundtable series are optimistic, confident, and committed to getting things done. And they know that with the right government policy actions and outcomes, the future will be a bright one for Canada’s energy and natural resources sectors and for the Canadian economy.

They’re aligned on a pragmatic but urgent growth agenda, one enabled by energy and environmental policy frameworks that allow infrastructure and energy projects, talent, and investment to move at the speed required to take advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity. What’s more, the public is on board. Women—as voters, executives, consumers, and community leaders—are clear about what they want: stable jobs, competitive industries, and reliable, affordable energy.

These women leaders are already hard at work building the workforce of the future, structuring partnerships, and delivering projects essential to Canada’s prosperity. Now’s the time for Canada’s policymakers to match their execution mindset and to leverage their experience and influence.

Let’s work together to help Canada accelerate its ambitious energy and infrastructure goals.

“This is only the beginning. At PwC Canada, we’re ready to work with governments, the private sector, Indigenous communities, and important organizations like CPW to turn Canada’s ambition into meaningful and measurable action. We need to collaborate so that Canada can harness its full potential. ”



Kirsten Baker
National Energy Leader, PwC Canada

“Canada Powered by Women knows executive women are leading with expertise, influence, and action every day. In this finite window of opportunity, they’re focused on what it takes to get things done. The Fueling What Matters report brings forward their insight—and calls on policymakers to engage them as partners to accelerate the “how.” The moment is now, and their leadership is a strategic advantage Canada should fully leverage. ”



Erin Campbell
CPW Board Member and Founding Partner & CEO Moneta Capital

CPW is committed to **enabling Canadian women’s voices** and **working with policy makers** to build a **brighter future** for Canada through **sound, actionable policy**. Stay **engaged** and **involved with CPW**:



Participate in meetings, advocacy days, and committee invitations:

Commit to opening up dialogue on key issues and opportunities and have in-depth discussions on our research and recommendations. To meet, please email us at hello@canadapoweredbywomen.ca







Join our community:

Subscribe to our newsletter to stay up to date on the research and insights that inform and support our advocacy at www.canadapoweredbywomen.ca/contact/



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Stay in touch:

Connect with our executive leadership:



Tracey Bodnarchuk

Founder & CEO, Canada Powered by Women

tracey@canadapoweredbywomen.ca



Kirsten Baker

CPW Executive Relationship Partner, PwC

kirsten.baker@pwc.com



Jennifer Lomas

VP, External Affairs and Marketing, Canada Powered by Women

jenn@canadapoweredbywomen.ca

This report was prepared by PwC Canada for Canada Powered by Women. It was developed based on a series of roundtable discussions held in Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver between February and April 2026, with support from CPW’s 2026 National Survey and other engaged women research and PwC’s 29th Global CEO Survey.

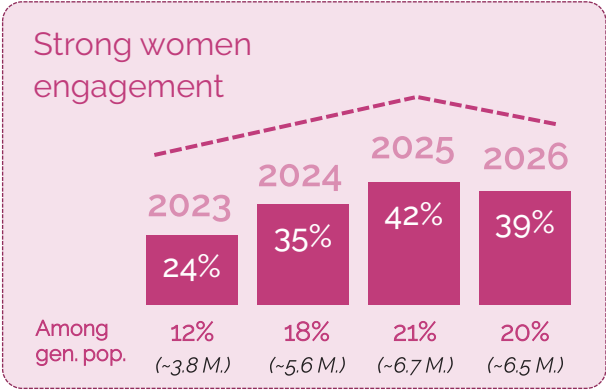
At PwC, innovation and human expertise go hand in hand. This article was created with the support of a PwC-owned AI assistant, with all information thoroughly checked and verified by our professionals to reflect PwC’s authentic research and insights.



ENGAGED WOMEN

Resources and economic prosperity

Who are engaged women?
 Engaged women are tuned in women who take in the news, understand the connection between the economy and energy, and want a voice in the conversation. They are interested in learning more and how they can support dialogue about issues facing Canadians including wealth and prosperity.



Energy as strategic economic engine

Agreement with...

- 86%** A strong and growing energy sector supports economic stability
- 85%** Canada's vast natural resources give the country a strong bargaining position in international trade and global energy discussions
- 73%** Oil and gas contributes to a successful, growing, and prosperous economy

Unify our home market

- 86%** Believe Canada's domestic policies need to be revised for easier domestic trade
- 85%** Support breaking down interprovincial barriers
- 79%** Agree Canada should develop natural resources in different regions
- 78%** Support responsible distributed development of oil and gas resources

Export diversification

- 84%** Support developing domestic refining capacity
- 77%** Support expanding export infrastructure beyond US
- 65%** Maintain exports to US while expanding to other global markets
- 72%** Support developing new pipelines to reduce reliance on US

Lead clearly or lose the moment

- 71%** Governments should act quickly only when benefits and trade-offs are clearly explained
- 68%** Decisive actions lead to increase in confidence in economic future
- 62%** Regulatory timelines should be streamlined
- Only 23%** Express high confidence in Canada's ability to approve and complete large energy projects in timely manner

Delivery credibility gap

Want speed, but don't trust delivery



- 71%** Act quickly only when trade-offs clearly explained
- 70%** Support Accelerating processes
- 65%** Ability to attract capital should be key element of policy
- 61%** Decision delays make Canada seem less competitive globally
- 54%** Decision making pace too slow

Economy is the bottom line



- 85%** Remove barriers to facilitate affordable & reliable energy development
- 75%** Thriving energy sector makes Canada the best place to work, live and raise a family
- Only 38%** Support industrial carbon pricing policy
- Just 11%** Support prioritizing environmental policies over economic growth; **82% favour them being done in tandem**



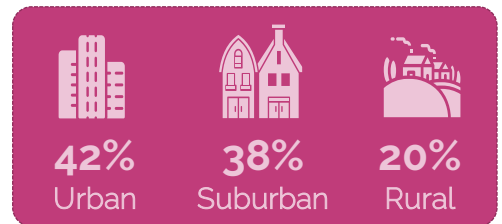
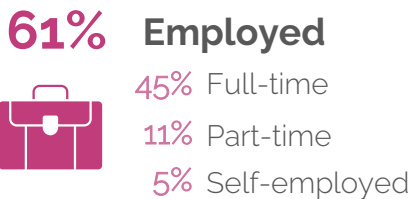
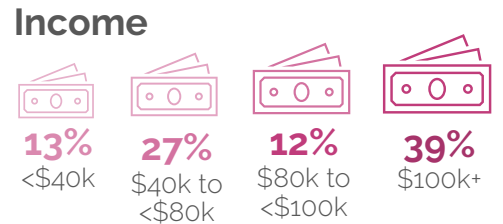
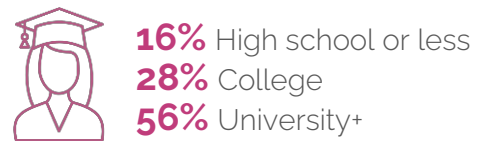
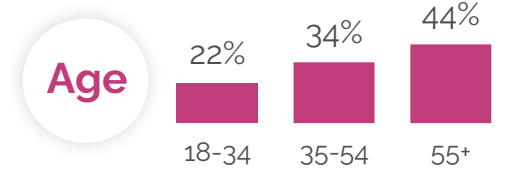
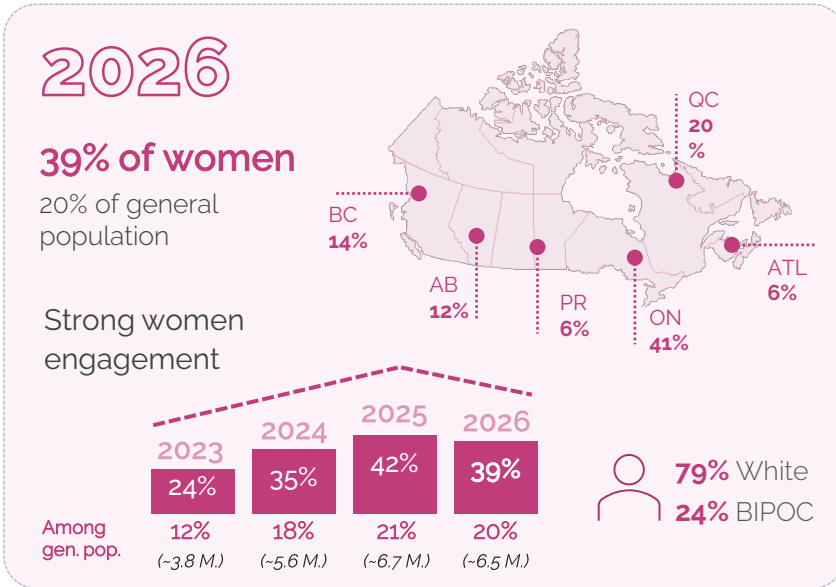


ENGAGED WOMEN

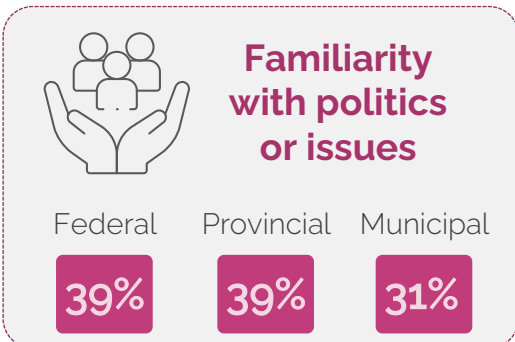
Who are engaged women?

Engaged women are tuned in women who take in the news, understand the connection between the economy and energy, and want a voice in the conversation. They are interested in learning more and how they can support dialogue about issues facing Canadians including wealth and prosperity.

Demographics



Knowledge and aspirations



Political beliefs (Strongly left excluded)

