

# A Conceptual Framework for Rural Women Social Entrepreneurs

- An intersection between gender and rural social enterprise in the Scottish Highlands & Islands

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## Problem Statement

Social enterprises (SEs) fill the gaps left by the government in social, and community services, they create innovative market opportunities toward a more sustainable form of development and are a potential vehicle for gender transformative change. SEs in rural Scotland are strongly supported by government policy as seen with the Scotland's Social Enterprise Strategy 2016-2026. Scotland has also introduced equality and entrepreneurial initiatives such as the Fairer Scotland Action Plan in 2016. Despite this, there is a lack of research regarding rural women social entrepreneurs and a lack of integrated policy on gender, and rural SE.

## Research Goal & Objectives

What is the experience of women social entrepreneurs in rural Scotland?

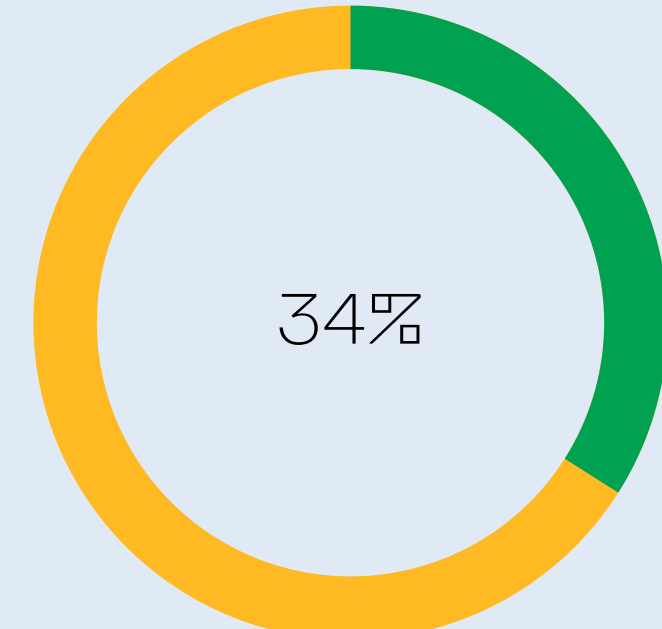
1. Identify their motivations to engage in a SE.
2. Identify their experiences during the start-up phase of a SE.
3. Identify their experiences during the maintenance phase of a SE.

## What is social enterprise?

Social enterprise aims at generating social impact or solving social and/or environmental problems using entrepreneurial approaches.

Social and environmental goals  
over economic gains  
Community-focused  
Triple bottom line

34% of Scottish SEs are rural



65% of Scottish SEs are women-led



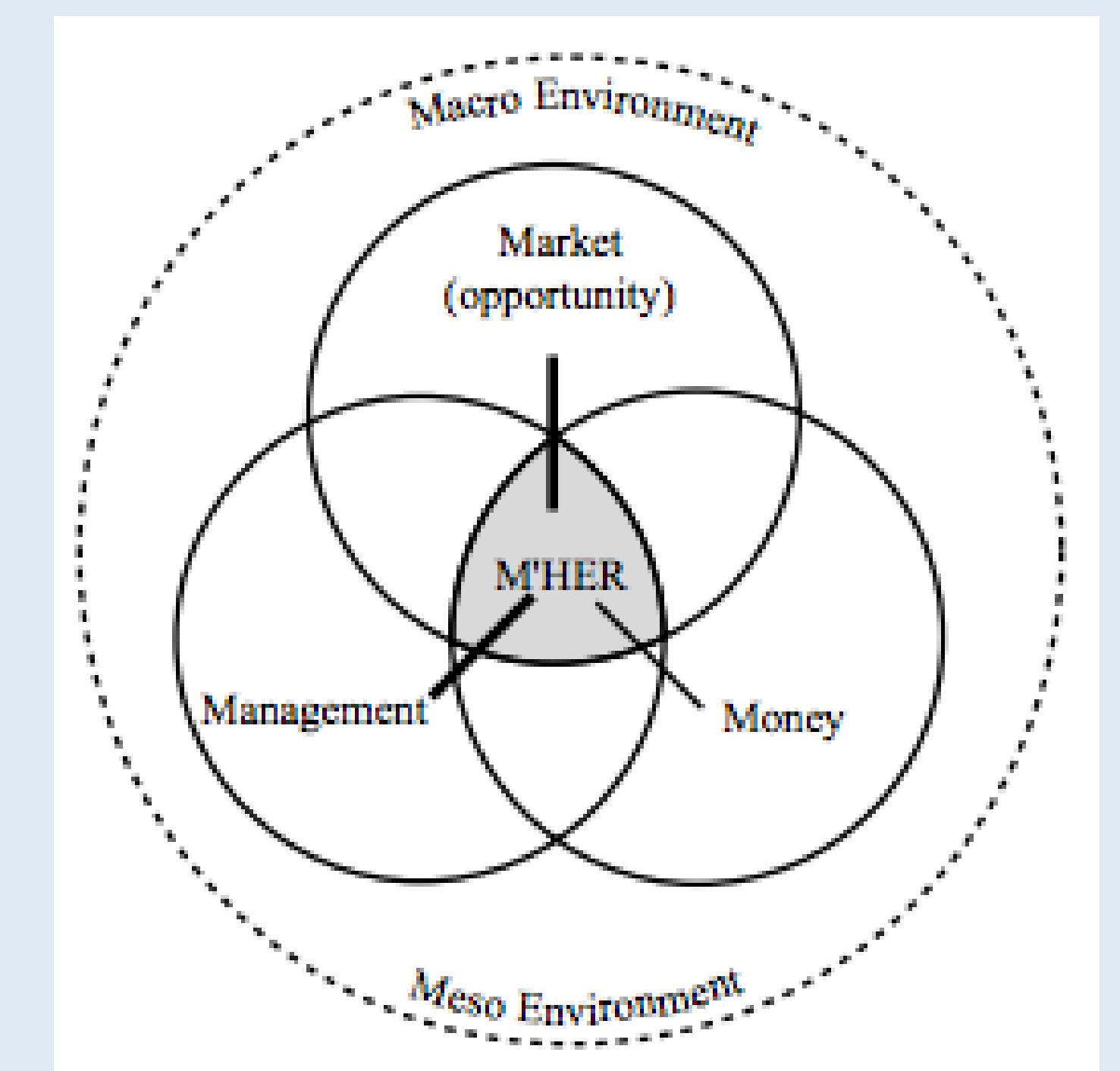
Source: Social Value Lab, 2019

# Conceptual Framework 6-M Gender-responsive Framework for Rural Women Social Entrepreneurs

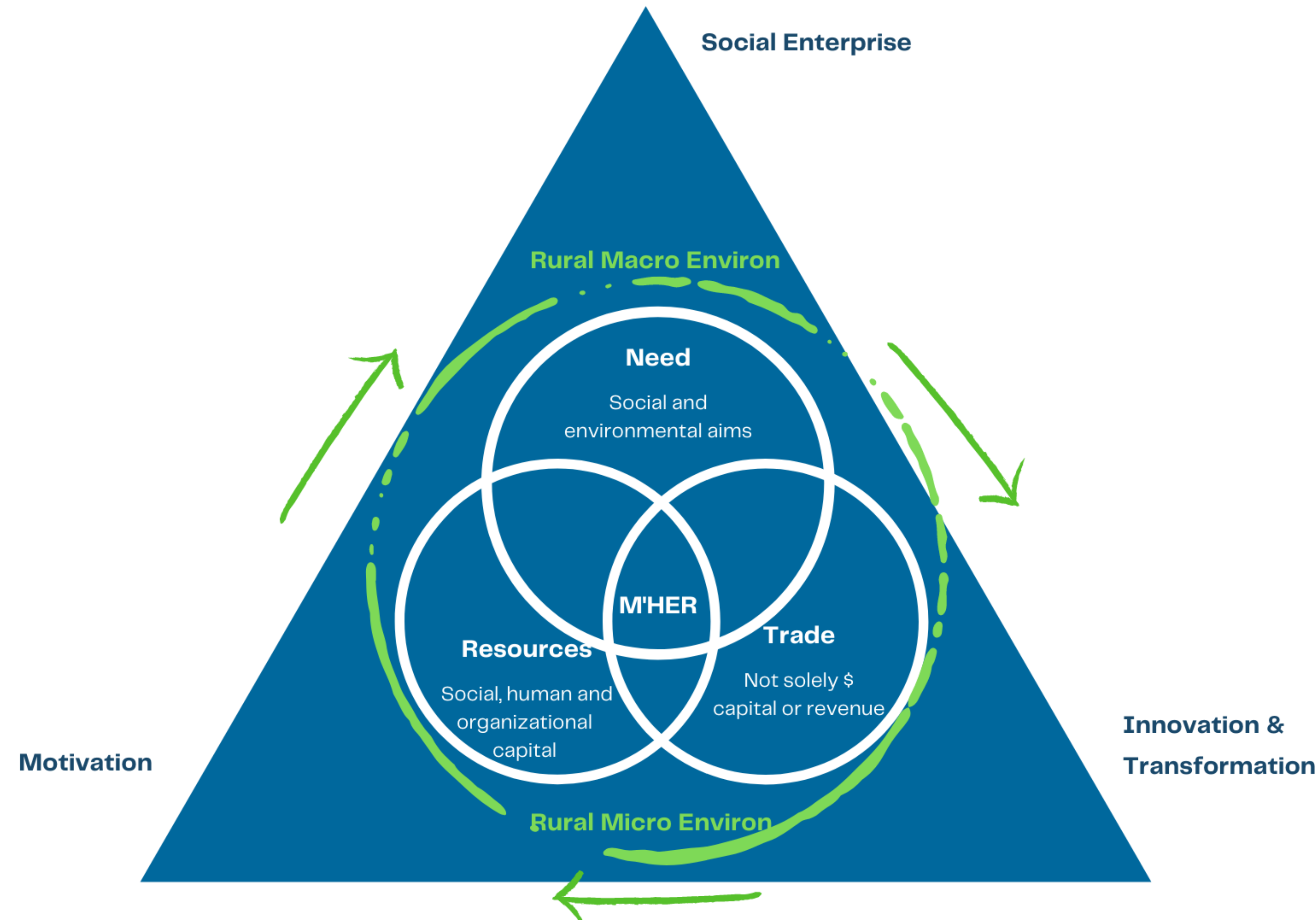
**MOTIVATION**  
A social entrepreneur intentionally aligns with cultural attributes such as altruism, care and protection of marginalized groups and the environment.

**M'HER**  
Symbolizes the centrality of meaningful gender awareness, inclusion, and analysis. Gender as a process integral to business ownership.

**RURAL MESO/MACRO ENVIRON**  
Examines existing structures and institutions that support/hinder rural development, specifically rural women social entrepreneurs.



Adaptation of the 5 M Gender-aware Framework for Women Entrepreneurship by Brush, de Bruin & Welter, 2009



**MARKET = NEED**  
Based on a social or environmental need, imbalance, inequity or gap. Turning a need into a market opportunity that addresses a greater good.

**MONEY = TRADE**  
SEs emphasize trade which broadens the idea of money to more than dollars. Trade is collaborative - sharing services, skills and resources with other community members.

**MANAGEMENT = RESOURCES**  
Resources highlight social embeddedness, and social capital found in rural areas.



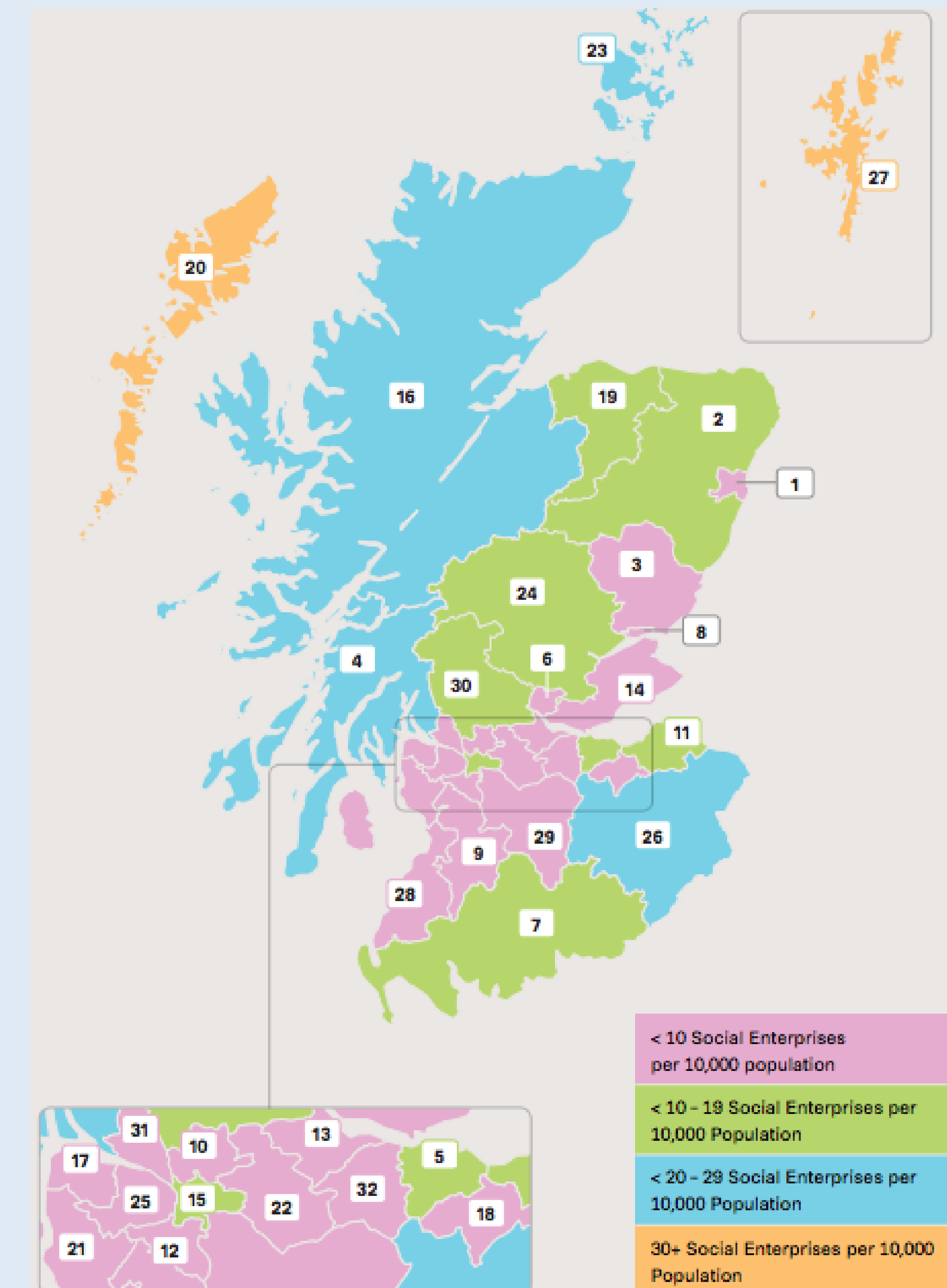
Women are well positioned in entrepreneurship being at the junction of community, business and society (Clark Muntean & Ozkazanc-Pan, 2016).

Credit  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurabegleybloom/2017/04/06/great-scots-how-3-women-are-shaking-up-tradition-in-scotland/?sh=d6e557c78bd8>

## Research Importance

The intersectionality of gender and rural social entrepreneurship is under-researched and requires further study to extend knowledge of a gendered perspective on rural SE; to better inform Scotland's social, and economic policies; and to recognize the role of rural female social entrepreneurs in development. This research will offer direct knowledge of women's experiences in rural SE, examining in principle, the push and pull between agency and structure within the **6-M Gender-responsive Framework**.

## Number of SEs per 10,000 people



Source: Social Value Lab, 2019

## References

Brush, C. G., de Bruin, A., & Welter, F. (2009). A gender-aware framework for women's entrepreneurship. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 1(1), 8-24.  
Clark Muntean, S & Ozkazanc-Pan, B. (2016). Feminist perspectives on social entrepreneurship: Critique and new directions. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*, 8(3), 221-241.  
Social Value Lab. (2019). *Social Enterprise in Scotland - Census 2019*. Retrieved from <https://socialenterprisecensus.org.uk/>