



GUIDE TO YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMS

for Chambers of Commerce
and Business Associations

Guide to Youth Entrepreneurship Programs for Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations



Center for International Private Enterprise



Contributors

Anna Nadgrodkiewicz
Global Senior Program Officer, CIPE

Maiko Nakagaki
Global Program Officer, CIPE

Colin Buerger
Global Program Officer, CIPE

Lauren Citrome
Global Assistant Program Officer, CIPE

Molly Brister
Global Program Assistant, CIPE

Cover Graphic

Rocío Martínez Jiménez
CIPE Global Editorial Cartoon Competition 2013 Finalist, Entrepreneurship Category

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) strengthens democracy around the globe through private enterprise and market-oriented reform. CIPE is one of the four core institutes of the National Endowment for Democracy and an affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Since 1983, CIPE has worked with business leaders, policymakers, and journalists to build the civic institutions vital to a democratic society. CIPE's key program areas include anticorruption, advocacy, business associations, corporate governance, democratic governance, access to information, the informal sector and property rights, and women and youth.

www.cipe.org

This publication was funded by the National Endowment for Democracy.

Copyright © 2013 by the Center for International Private Enterprise.

All rights reserved.

Guide to Youth Entrepreneurship Programs for Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Introduction	3
1. The Importance of Youth Programs for Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce	7
2. Developing a Youth Program: Approaches, Lessons, and Measuring Impact	9
3. Entrepreneurship Programs in Practice: Case studies from around the world	21
4. Other Types of Youth Employment Programs	43
Additional Resources	51
Endnotes	53

Acknowledgements

CIPE greatly appreciates the following organizations for sharing their experiences with youth entrepreneurship and employment projects.

- American Chamber of Commerce in Albania
- American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic
- American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines
- American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad & Tobago
- American Chamber of Commerce in Serbia
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust /Confederation of Indian Industry
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of North Ossetia (Russia)
- Coast Young Professionals (Gulfport, MS)
- Columbia Chamber of Commerce (Columbia, MO)
- Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) (Germany)
- FATE Foundation (Nigeria)
- Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce (Oklahoma City, OK)
- Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce (Green Bay, WI)
- Hellenic Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Instituto Invertir (Peru)
- Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Pakistan)
- Jamaica Employers Federation
- Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, Netherlands
- Nepalese Young Entrepreneurs Forum
- Nepalese Young Entrepreneurs' Forum
- Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Pakistan)
- Samriddhi, The Prosperity Foundation (Nepal)
- The Federation of Austrian Industry
- The Prince's Youth Business International
- Young Entrepreneurs Group of Asia Pacific
- Youth Business Sri Lanka/Ceylon Chamber of Commerce



Introduction

Sustainable economic growth requires entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs create new jobs, contribute to economic expansion, and become stakeholders in supporting a healthy business environment. As communities across the world struggle to meet employment demands, the importance of fostering a next generation of entrepreneurs – both job creators and entrepreneurial employees – is particularly salient.

Chambers of commerce and business associations play a pivotal role in supporting entrepreneurship. They are uniquely positioned between governments looking to create economic growth and the private sector desire to develop a new generation of employees. As the voice of the business community, chambers and associations are able to advocate for the reforms necessary to encourage job creation. Very often, these reforms lie at the heart of the interests of young people in these countries.

Young people's ability to participate in their country's economic life is a serious problem around the world. According to a report by the International Labor Organization, one in eight youth will be unemployed this year.¹ That translates into almost 75 million unemployed youth around the world – over 4 million more than in 2007. Facing impediments such as underdeveloped educational systems and the resultant skill gap, cultural barriers, and poorly designed policies, youth consistently face higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than the populous as a whole, and this has the potential to destabilize society.

Given these challenges, youth entrepreneurship represents an exciting new field for chambers of commerce and business associations as the benefits of engaging in youth entrepreneurship are numerous.

Through youth entrepreneurship programs, chamber and associations can further their membership base, support the business community, and foster the next generation of business leaders and democratic stakeholders. Chamber- and association-led youth entrepreneurship programs provide the private sector a way to invest in economic sustainability, youth capacity development, and a new generation of entrepreneurs. They help train youth to more easily access the workforce, whether by starting a new business or joining the existing business community. And they also serve as a way for chambers and business associations to engage in corporate citizenship.

Youth that are economically empowered are more likely to invest in themselves and their communities, become active business leaders, and represent their business interests. Entrepreneurship can lead young people to become more active members of chambers of commerce and business associations, invested in creating a better and more innovative environment for their business.

This guidebook is a resource for chambers of commerce, associations, and other business-oriented groups seeking to address some of the obstacles that young people face as they attempt to enter the economy in their communities. Its purpose is to share practical lessons practices from youth entrepreneurship programs from around the world and serve as a guide for business associations and chambers to develop or expand successful youth entrepreneurship and employment programs.

Methodology

Chambers of commerce and associations around the world have been supporting their business communities for decades or more, and in recent years there has been a greater focus on engaging with youth. However, the number of established youth entrepreneurship and employment programs hosted by chambers and business associations is still relatively small; that is why highlighting approaches that work is of particular value.

This guidebook gathers several such examples from various countries and organizations, drawing out practical lessons and innovative approaches.

This guidebook is based on interviews with chambers of commerce and business associations around the world, case studies, and nearly three decades of CIPE expertise working with business associations, chambers of commerce, and youth around the world. For the purposes of this guidebook, the definition of youth is flexible, but generally refers to youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 30 years old.

This guidebook is divided into five chapters. The first addresses how chambers of commerce and business associations fit into the existing field of youth entrepreneurship programming. It emphasizes the unique role that chambers and associations play in the business community, and how chamber-sponsored programs can benefit not only youth, but also the broader business community. The second chapter discusses various approaches to and components of youth entrepreneurship programs, as well as a set of practical lessons—or emerging trends—gleaned from CIPE’s assessment of youth programs from around the world. The third chapter highlights approaches and methods for measuring the impact of youth programs. The fourth chapter includes six case studies of youth entrepreneurship programs from India, Nigeria, Nepal, Peru, Russia, and Sri Lanka.

While this guidebook focuses primarily on youth entrepreneurship, other types of programs that address youth employment more broadly are also important to building youth capacity and supporting the business environment. They include education and personal development programs, job fairs, and job-matching programs. Since these programs use similar practical lessons and components as entrepreneurship programs, the fourth chapter covers other types of youth employment programs.

Additional resources on fostering youth entrepreneurship and employment programs are available at the end of this guidebook.

1

The Importance of Youth Programs for Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce

Many factors contribute to the challenging economic landscape confronting youth. They include population growth, the global economic crisis, resource shortages, and more. One underlying factor, however, is that conventional means of job creation are unable to keep up with demand. In many countries, the public sector—traditionally a primary engine of employment—can no longer absorb millions of new graduates. Instead, young people may endure chronic unemployment or underemployment, often trapped in temporary or low-productivity jobs.

Entrepreneurship not only provides much-needed alternatives for those in need of work, but also reinvigorates countries' economies.² Developing the entrepreneurial potential of youth can help create alternatives to state employment, while teaching young people the values of self-initiative and self-dependency. Organizations around the world such as development agencies, governments, and non-profits promote youth entrepreneurship for exactly these reasons: to address spiraling youth unemployment and support economic prosperity. Many such programs provide skills and training workshops, networking opportunities, and business plan competitions to motivate and educate young entrepreneurs.

In the United States, for instance, there is a strong tradition of youth entrepreneurship programs run by private sector companies, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions. The Kauffman Foundation runs a program that brings top entrepreneurs from around the world to the United States.³ The U.S. Small Business Administration provides free online training, assessment tools, and guides to starting a business.⁴ Private sector companies like Caterpillar have partnered with non-profits to support youth-led small businesses in India and Indonesia.⁵ And community colleges in California are trying to teach students “how to *make* a job, instead of *take* a job.”⁶

Each of these programs addresses an entrepreneurial need in their community, but they are only a part of the solution. While many non-governmental organizations, development agencies, and similar institutions conduct programs that support youth entrepreneurship, these organizations do not possess the well of expertise that chambers of commerce and business associations possess given their specific mission to promote entrepreneurship and their member base.

Entrepreneurship initiatives undertaken by chambers of commerce and business associations are crucial in the formation of strong links between new and old generations of entrepreneurs, as many small and medium-sized enterprises simply do not have the capacity to develop programs of their own. Because of their role within the business community, chamber and business association youth programs and interactions are distinctive from similar programs hosted by other types of organizations.

2

Developing a Youth Program: Approaches, Lessons, and Measuring Impact

Approaches to Youth Entrepreneurship Programs

Youth employment and entrepreneurship programs come in many forms. They range from formal training workshops to business competitions to initiatives that match young people with local internships. Choosing what type of program will work for a chamber or business association depends on many factors, ranging from community needs to organizational capacity. A well-designed program fits an organization's strategy and local context, sets appropriate objectives, and spells out how resources will be used effectively to achieve the objectives. Two initial steps for realizing such a program are: 1) Identifying a programmatic focus, 2) Crafting a program that provides solutions and addresses the root of an issue facing the business community.

Identifying a Programmatic Focus

Identifying a specific challenge facing local youth and businesses that the program will address helps to set attainable goals for a youth program. Important questions to ask during the conceptualization of a youth program are: what are the needs and goals of youth in your community? What are the needs and goals of your chamber or business association? Does your organization have the resources necessary to host a program that will meet these needs?

To answer these questions, engagement with the target stakeholders of the program – youth – is crucial. As with any initiative, a program's development and successful implementation will depend on the formulation of a program that successfully considers youth perspectives and serves their needs. Knowing what these young people want to gain from the program, what challenges they are facing, and what their long term goals are will help build a successful youth program.

Importantly, engagement with youth is a process, not a one-off event. Creating an ongoing dialogue between chambers and youth is important in understanding youth's overall needs and goals, and reflecting contemporary perspectives among youth as a program evolves and grows.

A similar process should be asked of the business community. What are the business community's objectives and what will it require to achieve them? How can youth take part in achieving these goals?

Understanding the local context plays a large role in this process. What works for a chamber of commerce in India may not work for a business association in Jamaica. By assessing and taking into account any local realities that may affect a youth program, business associations and chambers will be better able to tailor the program to achieve the goals of all of the participating parties.

Providing a Solution

When crafting a solution to an issue, it is important not only to take into account goals of the youth and business communities, but also to tailor the program to address the causes, rather than the symptoms, of the target issue. A program that only addresses the symptoms will not be as effective as a program that addresses both symptoms and root causes.

For example, if the major issue in a community is that youth do not have specific skills needed to gain employment, a program that provides an educational component along with internships or a job-matching service will be more successful than a program that only tries to match young people with potential employers.

Achieving long-lasting change for youth requires looking beyond the scope of individual programs. Youth unemployment is almost always a result of deeper institutional challenges. Improvements to the business environment and the policy process can have a positive influence on far more youth than assistance to a limited number of individuals. For example, rampant corruption can be a major discouraging factor for youth.⁷ Seriously addressing corruption can encourage a business culture more conducive to entrepreneurship. Thinking about how a chamber or business association's advocacy efforts can complement a youth program, and vice versa, can make an organization's overall strategy more effective.

While addressing institutional issues is an important long-term goal achieved through actions taken at the national and local levels, in many countries tackling corruption or other institutional issues begins with targeted work being done in the short term at the local level. Youth entrepreneurship programs provide a way to help support an entrepreneurial environment from the bottom up. Building a program that engages youth after an official program ends (ex. through alumni networks) is important for creating longer-lasting change and more sustainable programs.

Components of youth programs

There is no set recipe for a successful youth entrepreneurship program. What works in one region may be repetitive or irrelevant in another. There are, however, common components found in many youth programs. CIPE's survey of youth employment programs around the world revealed many youth programs contain, to varying degrees, four complementary components: education, application of skills, mentorship, and peer networking.

Education: For many jobs, employment is impossible without education. Training programs can give youth a foundation of skills that have the potential to serve them for a lifetime of employment or business ownership. Identifying what type of education will most benefit youth is important in facilitating an effective training program. Internships, vocational training, office management, and business plan development are all types of such programs.

Training programs are especially important for developing youth entrepreneurship. Learning about business plans, regulations, and financing are all crucial to starting a business, and many times these skills are not part of traditional curriculums. Moreover, if youth in a community lack the skills necessary to join the workplace, then barriers to starting one's own business are even higher. Education provides aspiring entrepreneurs with the tools they need to turn their dreams into reality. It can also provide points of inspiration for young people to gain the confidence they need to innovate, take risks, and see a business plan through.

Application of skills: Training and education programs can only go so far in preparing youth for the real world business environment. While it is impossible to simulate a complete business environment for students, competitions, internships, and other types of programs can familiarize young entrepreneurs with what it takes to be successful. Business plan competitions, for example, draw upon the skills young people may learn in an entrepreneurship training program. Internships allow youth to become acquainted with an office environment. They also bring young people in contact with potential mentors or future employers.

Mentorship: Just like building a house, if education is the foundation of youth entrepreneurship, then mentorship is the frame. Mentors help entrepreneurs build their dream through support, networking, and knowhow. They provide everything from advice from their own experience, to feedback on navigating the business world, to friends and allies for entrepreneurs to turn to when the going gets tough.⁸

Jamaica Employers' Federation: The Jamaica Youth Employment Network (JYEN)

The Jamaica Youth Employment Network (JYEN) was launched in 2005 under the aegis of the Jamaica Employers' Federation (JEF). As part of its mission to promote entrepreneurship and productive employment among at-risk youth in Jamaica, JYEN coordinates an annual two-week Future Leaders Camp held at the Federation's Kingston premises and focused on fostering entrepreneurship and employment.

At the camp, 25 to 30 youth up to 25-28 years old who are unemployed and looking for work participate in training workshops on communication, behavior during a job interview, proper demeanor in a workplace, and other topics important for their professional success. The camp is meant to deliver holistic education to the participants. Following graduation from the camp, JYEN keeps maintains connections with past participants, referring the ones who indicate interest in a job placement or additional training to the Ministry of Labor and the Ministry of Youth so that they can participate in additional government-sponsored programs.

JYEN is active in its outreach, coordinating with university career fairs to provide information to young people about the training opportunities available to them and services that JYEN provides for employers, as well as organizing professional development seminars for university students. Moreover, JEF has recently revised and reprinted its 2007 *Ready for Work and Business* handbook, which serves as a guide for youth entering the workforce, and it is also planning to launch a series of training webinars to better prepare Jamaican youth for work.

More information: <http://jamaicaemployers.com/>

Mentors are not only resources in their own right, but are also important directories for pointing entrepreneurs towards area-specific resources they might need, or connecting them with the right expert. Mentors can help young entrepreneurs to broaden a business's potential and think about how business decisions might fit into a larger and longer-term strategy. They can also facilitate business relationships and advocate for young entrepreneurs who do not already have established networks.

Peer networking: Building business relations is essential for individuals in any area of work, but it is especially important for entrepreneurs. Business relationships create opportunity for new ideas, innovation, and growth.⁹ While joining existing professional networks is an option for some young entrepreneurs, in developing countries these options may not be available. Building in a networking component to a youth program can help young entrepreneurs stay connected, motivated, and continue their entrepreneurial education.

One way that entrepreneurship programs can maintain networks is through alumni groups. Social media has transformed the ease of staying connected, and is now a valuable tool for maintaining alumni groups. Once a training workshop or program is over, alumni networks can help an organization stay in touch with the participants, share success stories, and recruit alumni mentors or trainers. This approach has worked well for the *EmprendeAhora* entrepreneurship program in Peru, where alumni stay connected through a very active Facebook group, sharing news and event information among their peers. Read more about how *EmprendeAhora* utilizes alumni networking in the case studies section.

Practical lessons

Various successful youth entrepreneurship programs share similar features. From developing stakeholder buy-in to tailoring the program to the local environment, these practices will help build a strong foundation when attempting to develop youth entrepreneurship programs in new settings.

Buy-in from multiple stakeholders

Across all of the characteristics that effective youth entrepreneurship programs share, developing buy-in from and partnerships with the local community are key factors to success, helping to ground the initiative in the needs and demands of the community. The list of potential program stakeholders is broad, including local businesses, schools and universities, nongovernmental organizations, and local government. Maintaining a broad network of stakeholders will create a useful and diverse network of support for program participants and can provide program organizers with a natural advocacy network.

Understanding local context

A successful youth program cannot simply be dropped into a community and expected to function successfully. Put more simply, these initiatives cannot be mass produced, top-down affairs. As such, when developing programs aimed at building the skills and capacity of young entrepreneurs, successful programs are designed with a strong awareness of the characteristics of the local environment.

Capturing all of the facets that make up local context is difficult, but successful youth entrepreneurship programs take into account who the program should seek to help, the availability of young people to participate, the local institutions that are already available for youth, the sustainability of the program, and where the program is being instituted. Program design should also be based on real world skills demanded by the young entrepreneurs and the economic opportunities available locally.

Competitive selection processes

In every successful youth entrepreneurship program, reaching out to potential participants and then implementing a screening process to identify the most promising applicants is one of the most important pieces. By creating a system or set of standards that participants must meet, organizers are able to ensure that participants have the commitment and the ability to fully take advantage of the training workshops and experience provided.

The program can also screen toward the objectives of funders or partners in specific industries.

Beyond this, a competitive selection process allows for the screening of applicants who match desired backgrounds, interests, and knowledge. An example of such a process is the one used by Young Business Sri Lanka (YBSL). As YBSL's program was designed to target and assist disadvantaged youth, the group developed a process that accommodates youth from

Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST)

BYST works with young entrepreneurs from economically underprivileged sections of society to provide them financial support, mentorship, monitoring, and training programs. Potential mentors—who come from the private sector—must first go through training programs prior to starting their mentorships with BYST participants. BYST offers several training programs for mentors, such as a 6 hour self-paced, interactive, fun and user-friendly “Mentor-Online” training tool (MOL). Over 1,000 mentors have trained this way. BYST also offers International Accreditation for mentors who complete MOL courseware and provide on-the-ground mentoring to entrepreneurs for at least 10 hours in one year. 1,000 mentors have been accredited by City and Guild, UK's largest and best-known vocational awarding body. Mentors can also participate in one of BYST's 21 Mentor Chapters, which provide a forum for networking among mentors in common geographic areas. Mentor Chapters are also useful for sharing concerns and best practices, as well as attracting speakers in areas of mutual interest to the mentors.

backgrounds who lack access to business skills and resources. Details on YBSL's selection process are further discussed in the case study section.

Training programs for mentors

One commonly overlooked issue in many mentor programs is the fact that expertise in an issue area can be challenging to

convey if the individual is not prepared ahead of time. In this vein, many successful programs include a component to help mentors develop their abilities to teach.

Sustainability

Building a strong youth entrepreneurship program takes time, and a program becomes stronger by incorporating lessons learned from each program cycle. Program graduates that provide support, advice, and professional networking opportunities for each other can also increase the impact of the program over time. Therefore, one of the shared traits of successful youth entrepreneurship programs is a sustainable operations model. Specifically, such a model addresses four key areas that contribute to a long-lasting, successful program:

- *Sustainable funding model*

The most common difficulty that organizations encounter when they are seeking to build a legitimate, long-term program is funding. However, this should not be a challenge if the program model taps into resources that are commonly available to entrepreneurship programs. For example, most of the programs in the case studies section of this manual recognize that entrepreneurship education for the youth in their community will benefit the economy in general, and the businesses specifically. As a result, local businesses, donor organizations, and local governments have supported these initiatives. Also, like many other educational programs, participants are often expected to pay admission fees.

- *Assistance/benefits to participants after the program ends*

Continuing to provide assistance or benefits to youth program participants after a program ends not only lengthens a program's impact, but also helps youth maintain momentum and continue to build skill sets and networks. Post-program assistance can range from the minimal effort needed to start an alumni Facebook group to continuing one-on-one contact with participants. At the very least, having a platform or system to stay connected with alumni can make a difference in assuring the program is not a one-off event and that alumni have a portal to stay connected with each other and program staff.

- *Full time staff + volunteers*

A well-designed project is only as good as its execution, which depends on the leadership and performance of key personnel. Professional personnel are commonly scarce in not-for-profit organizations, and may be managing multiple projects, so it is vital to ensure that a project has dedicated leadership and sufficient staffing.

- *Spreading program awareness and success stories*

During the course of a project, communicating project impact and success stories—such as how many youth participated or how many businesses were started after a program—allows a chamber or association to promote the issue it is addressing and communicate its success to project stakeholders. Success stories give recognition to program participants, as well as showcase contributions of donors and participating organizations. There are many ways of promoting a project and telling its story, including through news articles, press releases, blogs, social media (Facebook, Twitter), as well as various ways of conveying project impact, such as through project data or human interest stories.

Measuring Impact

Determining the impact of a youth program is important for many reasons. Identifying which aspects of the program worked, and which did not, can help build a better program. Success stories can draw media attention and public awareness, encouraging greater participation or funding. What is more, improvements to the business environment have a positive influence on far more firms and individuals than a single program does to particular firms or individuals. Measuring the impact of institutional changes can facilitate new goals for future programs and help develop a business association or chamber's overall youth strategy.

So how can associations and chambers measure the impact of their youth entrepreneurship programs? And how do they determine if a program is successful?

Before implementing a program, it is important to get a clear picture early on of how your organization envisions a successful outcome. This is more than an evaluation question. The answer will shape how objectives are articulated and direct the program's activities. Two simple questions that help guide this process are: "What will change be as a result of the project?" (for example, will more youth be starting businesses? Will more youth be employed?) and "So what?" (why does the program matter? How will a chamber's members and/or the public at large benefit?).

A successful youth entrepreneurship program should be designed to go beyond short-term outputs and focus on long-term impact to contribute to system-level changes that benefit youth.

To have a lasting impact, a project must make a difference in the relevant social and political areas, local leadership, and sustainability. With these components, programs will be more likely to attract future funding, knowledge, and talent. Youth programs that can help build a new generation of successful entrepreneurs and leaders will also help build a new generation of mentors, funders, volunteers, and advocates.

3

Entrepreneurship Programs in practice: Case studies from around the world

Youth entrepreneurship programs hosted by chambers of commerce, business associations, or affiliated organizations, are working to improve business environments around the world. The case studies below hail from India, Nigeria, Peru, Nepal, Russia, and Sri Lanka.

In order to compare and contrast the programs, each case study is organized in the same manner: a brief overview of the organization, year started, what the youth program consists of, the application process, funding models, and impact. For some, there is an innovative aspects section to highlight specific program attributes that are unique and noteworthy.

The section on the youth program is further defined by program components previously discussed in this guidebook: education, application of skills, mentorship, and networking. Categorizing components of a program using this method highlights why and how these components are important to youth entrepreneurship programs. Categorization also allows guidebook users to easily compare how various programs utilize education, application of skills, mentorship, and networking.

It is important to note here that not all entrepreneurship programs contain all of these components and the order of these components varies amongst programs. Still, drawing out these components from each case study facilitates further study, informs practical lessons, and allows for patterns to emerge for developing effective youth entrepreneurship programs.

India: Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST)



Organization: Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) is a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) that assists disadvantaged Indian youth in developing business ideas into viable enterprises under the guidance of mentors.

Year started: 1992

Youth program: BYST works with young entrepreneurs from economically underprivileged sections of society to provide them financial support, mentorship, monitoring, and training programs.

The program lasts for two years, and over 2,500 entrepreneurs have participated in the program through the years. The average loan to entrepreneurs is \$7,000 USD and BYST does not require entrepreneurs to make down payments or show collateral.

One of BYST's most successful innovations has been its mobile mentor clinics. Mobile clinics provide a way for mentors to travel and meet with rural entrepreneurs.

- *Mentorship:* BYST provides entrepreneurs with mentors from a variety of private sector organizations. Potential mentors must first go through training workshops prior to starting their mentorships with BYST participants. BYST's relationship with CII has provided many sources of volunteers from both small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and larger multinational corporations. In keeping with the traditional notions of apprenticeship in India, BYST mentors provide more than business advice – they offer guidance in a variety of areas and often build long-lasting, personal relationships that span across religious, gender, and socioeconomic divides. Currently, BYST has approximately 3,000 volunteers who participate in various aspects of BYST programs, including the actual mentoring of the entrepreneurs as well as in the process to select who can participate in BYST.
- *Education:* During their program with BYST, mentors and training programs teach entrepreneurs how to register and formalize their businesses, institutionalize good governance

BYST utilizes its affiliation with the Confederation of Indian Industry to connect young entrepreneurs with foreign and domestic chambers of commerce.

in their businesses, and integrate social responsibility into their activities. Mentors and entrepreneurs typically meet ten times over the course of two years and entrepreneurs participate in different types of business management training workshops, such as accounting, marketing, and taxation.

Entrepreneurs have started a variety of businesses, including publishing, doll making, cosmetics manufacturing, and soy milk production.

- *Networking:* BYST also draws from CII's international network. BYST representatives have presented the BYST model at meetings of other chambers of commerce and industry associations outside of India. Furthermore, when foreign chambers come to India, they often set up meetings

with BYST entrepreneurs and local BYST programs. Because of CCI, BYST has many chamber connections.

- *Application process:* Applying to participate in BYST is a competitive process for young entrepreneurs, and only approximately 10 percent of those initially interested in the program are eventually invited to participate. As a first step in the recruitment and selection process, BYST raises awareness of its programs through presentations at vocational institutions, grassroots nongovernmental organizations, and industrial organizations, and by media coverage of successful BYST entrepreneurs. Then, those individuals who are interested in the program meet with mentors in 20-30 minute sessions.

For entrepreneurs who are not accepted into one of BYST's programs, BYST offers counsel on how to build their entrepreneurial capacity.

During that time, mentors evaluate whether or not an applicant is ready to become an entrepreneur. After that, BYST conducts a due-diligence process, visiting entrepreneurs' intended sites of work and evaluating the entrepreneurs' skills. BYST participants must have some degree of literacy, although many have not completed their high school education. Participants must also be between the ages of 18 and 35 years. For those applicants who are not selected, BYST offers counsel on what those young people could do to become entrepreneurs outside of BYST's programs.

- *Funding:* The majority of BYST's funding comes from corporate donations and sponsorships. BYST uses its board to raise money, although it has recently started to appeal to business and donor agencies outside of India. BYST also hosts events and seminars on topics such as mentoring, and corporations sponsor those seminars which raises money for BYST.

- *Impact:* Today, BYST has expanded and set up eight regional clusters in Delhi, Rural Haryana, Chennai, Rural Tamil Nadu, Pune, Hyderabad, Rural Maharashtra and Assam. It has financed approximately 2,550 entrepreneurs, creating employment for 25,000 people. Through its training programs and referrals, BYST has reached out to 75,000 young people nationwide. The goal is for young entrepreneurs to not only reach a level where they self-sufficient, but also make a valuable contribution to society through creating wealth and employment. BYST has been highly successful in this regard, with over 95 percent of entrepreneurs increasing both their capital and job creation 13 fold.
- *Innovative Aspects:* One of BYST's most successful innovations has been its mobile mentor clinics. Instead of having young entrepreneurs in rural areas travel into cities, where their mentors are often located, mobile clinics provide a way for a group of mentors to travel to entrepreneurs' sites whereas previously long distances would have made mentoring difficult. Furthermore, while CII used to only provide support mechanisms to BYST, such as technology, travel management, and communication costs, now CII also co-brands with BYST and provides services directly to BYST entrepreneurs, such as counselling workshops, training programs, and other deliverables.

The majority of BYST's funding comes from corporate donations and sponsorships, but BYST also draws upon its board and hosts events to raise money.

More information: www.bystonline.org

Nigeria: FATE Foundation



Organization: The FATE Foundation is a private sector-led non-profit organization that was created in March 2000 by Mr. Fola Adeola, Managing Director of Guaranty Trust Bank, with the support from a group of Nigerian business and civil society leaders from multinational companies, law firms, banks, and microfinance institutions. The Foundation was created in response to the challenges of unemployment-induced poverty in Nigeria. FATE’s mission is to foster wealth creation by promoting business and entrepreneurial development among Nigerian youth.

Year started: 2000

Youth program: While FATE has many initiatives, its core programs are the Aspiring Entrepreneurs Program (AEP), the Emerging Entrepreneurs Program (EEP), and Short

Entrepreneurial Courses (SEC). Each of these programs targets entrepreneurs in various stages of their career. The AEP is a four-month intensive hands-on business and entrepreneurial training program. EEP is a nine-week executive training program for twenty-five nascent entrepreneurs between the ages of 30 and 45 years, who have a minimum of five years business management experience, and whose businesses have an annual turnover of \$64,500. The SEC program exposes the general public to advice from business leaders who have expertise in specific industry areas.

Nigeria’s FATE Foundation works with entrepreneurs at various stages of their career, from aspiring young entrepreneurs to established business persons.

- *Education:* The AEP program includes classroom sessions facilitated by volunteers—accomplished professionals—who use a practical curriculum; basic IT training workshops; mentoring sessions; advisory services; and access to FATE’s library. The program meets twice a week for a total of six hours. Participants are mostly entrepreneurs and those who have jobs during the day, so the program is held in the evenings. The EEP is likened to a set of practical refresher courses in topics such as business strategy, risk analysis and

For all of its programs, FATE relies on a strong network of professionals who serve as class instructors, mentors, or consultants.

management, business networking, ethics, and more. Unlike the AEP, the EEP does not include business plan-advice or mentoring unless a participant requests it. For three days a week, participants have two or three classes a day, each of

which is two hours long. SEC is also an educational program. Bi-weekly sessions cover a wide range of topics and are also useful for the development needs of employees in small and medium enterprises. Past topics for SEC programs include customer service, communication skills, decision-making and problem solving, and financial strategies for uncertainty. Approximately 20 people attend each SEC, and approximately 50 percent of participants are below the age of 40.

- *Mentorship:* For all of its programs, FATE relies on its network of professionals who serve as volunteers in its programs, whether as class instructors, mentors, consultants, or any other type of position. Since the founding of FATE, its cadre of private sector volunteers and mentors has grown from 100 to 2,500 volunteers. FATE solicits volunteers by researching organizations that have corporate responsibility programs. Then, FATE staff makes presentations to business leaders so that they understand what their employees can volunteer to do with FATE. Finally, FATE organizes a training-of-trainers program for businesses who are

interested in sending volunteers. Many volunteers have very positive experiences with the program, and as a result they recommend it to their peers. As a result, 50 percent of new professional trainers are recommended by current and past volunteers. Volunteers participate in FATE programs based on the relevance and applicability of their skills to a given project's needs.

FATE asks that all participants pay a small fee to participate in its programs. That fee often does not reflect the full cost of the program, but it ensures continued and engaged participation.

- *Networking:* A major component of the EEP program is the EEP Business Forum, an annual small conference for EEP participants to discuss business matters with leading professionals in Nigeria. The EEP Forum is held in different venues, ranging from hotel conference halls to event centers. Professionals from various sectors also visit the classes to share information about their businesses, thereby helping participants learn from businesses in sectors other than their own.
- *Application process:* For AEP, each year there are 250 participants who are graduates of tertiary institutions and between the ages of 22 and 40. FATE receives more applications than it can accept. For those applicants who have not yet established a business, FATE asks that they explain, among other things, their business concept, why they want to start a business, and what, if anything stops them from starting their business currently. After reviewing applications, FATE conducts phone and in-person interviews. The recruitment process for admission into the FATE programs is conducted by volunteers (consultants and alumni) of the Foundation. Interviews are done in two panel sessions, and each session includes three interviewers. Applications are evaluated by the viability of their idea (technical experience and marketability), previous entrepreneurial experience, if any; and preparedness to start

their business right after the program (if they are not in business already).

- *Funding:* FATE asks that all participants pay a small fee to participate in its programs. That fee often does not reflect the full cost of the program, but the fee ensures continued and engaged participation. In some programs, the fee serves as a deposit and is returned after completion of the program. Programs with actual costs are still subsidized by approximately 80 percent, either by FATE or any organization it is working with on a project. Funding also differs slightly by project. For AEP, every year FATE is able to offer privately funded merit-based scholarships to students who cannot afford to pay the AEP program fee of approximately USD \$310. Scholarships primarily come from foundations and private sector organizations, and their number varies by year. Individual businesspeople often provide scholarships for students who are interested in their particular sectors. For SEC, local organizations fund most of these courses.
- *Impact:* FATE promotes its programs through its yearly newsletters, recruitment programs at universities, newspaper advertisements, and social media. The organization has grown rapidly, and as of 2011 FATE has graduated over 2,702 entrepreneurs from the FATE Aspiring Entrepreneurs Program and the FATE Emerging Entrepreneurs Program. 65 percent of AEP graduates are currently running their own business and providing employment for an average of four people each. AEP graduates are in a range of industries, such as farming, manufacturing, and IT services. Some students have also gone on to start schools or medical centers. FATE has also trained 26,628 people at half-day workshops and special workshops. In all of its programs, FATE has mobilized over 700 private sector professionals as volunteer program facilitators, mentors, and consultants.

More information: www.fatefoundation.com, www.facebook.com/fatefoundation

*Peru: Instituto Invertir*¹⁰



Organization: The program is organized by a local nonprofit, Instituto Invertir, and a local university that has the capacity and resources to support more than 100 people.

Year youth program started: 2008

Youth program: EmprendeAhora is a leadership and entrepreneurship training program giving university students from rural Peru the necessary tools and empowerment to open their businesses, generate income, and create local employment.

- *Education:* The program trains the best university students from all over Peru in leadership, democracy, market economy and business planning. EmprendeAhora lasts for three to five months (in total of 90 classroom hours) and the program is divided into three sessions consisting of classes; business plan coaching; lectures by successful entrepreneurs, leading academics, and political leaders; educational trips to large companies; workshops led by young leaders from Lima; and a closing ceremony. To graduate and receive a certificate from EmprendeAhora, students are required to organize their own leadership and entrepreneurial workshops in their communities for high school or university students to share the knowledge and values from the program. Another requirement for completing the EmprendeAhora program is creating a business plan.
- *Application of Skills:* Participants must design a business plan with other students from their region. Throughout the three sessions, students participate in a 12-week Virtual Business Plan Course with a personal coach (who is usually a successful business leader from their local regions). The 10

finalists present their projects to a jury, and the best three plans receive cash prizes during the closing ceremony and have an opportunity to present their proposed businesses for financing from a local microcredit lending institution.

- *Mentorship:* Coaches from academia and the business sector selected by Invertir help the students (virtually and in person) during the program and beyond to help them improve and implement their business plans. The alumni network also has the capacity to conduct online training and mentoring for new businesses.
- *Networking:* More than 6,000 people receive Facebook updates ranging from general posts about entrepreneurship to the specific activities of program alumni. A separate Facebook group for alumni is very active with alums sharing news and event information. The alumni that have started

Participants in Peru's EmprendeAhora program must not only create a business plan, but also organize their own leadership and entrepreneurial workshops for students in their communities.

their own businesses are invited to participate in entrepreneurship activities organized by Invertir including: Entrepreneurship Week, Venture Forum, and BID Challenge contest; and are invited to participate in the Entrepreneurial Fair at the end of the third educational session each year where they have a booth and are

able to show what they are doing as entrepreneurs. Lastly, in September 2012, Invertir organized the first alumni conference to promote, strengthen, and consolidate the EmprendeAhora Alumni network.

- *Application Process:* After a competitive selection process that includes an aptitude and entrepreneurial attitude exam, a business idea, personal profile, and in-person interview, approximately 120 students from outside the capital, Lima, are brought together for 90 hours of classes over the course of three months. Reaching beyond the capital city and commercial hub enables the program to

spark entrepreneurship in places that are most in need of it, including rural areas and cities that are less developed and more susceptible to economic uncertainty and populist rhetoric.

Impact: Since EmprendeAhora started in 2008, the program has had measurable success, including:

- Nearly 500 students have received direct training, and more than 12,000 students of schools and universities have been benefited by the EmprendeAhora multiplicative effect, due to the program's mandatory leadership and entrepreneurial workshops organized by the students in their regions.
- More than 130 businesses have been created or are in development. Several of these businesses have received financial support from companies such as Crediscotia, EmprendeAhora's financial partner. The most successful have received local and national awards.
- According to the surveys and the testimonies, the attitudes and perceptions from the students towards democracy and market economy changed as a result of the program.

EmprendeAhora's competitive selection process assures accepted students are committed to the program and lends the program a sense of prestige.

More information:

<http://www.emprendeahora.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/EmprendeAhoraOficial>

<http://leading-practices.cipe.wikispaces.net/>

Instituto+Invertir%2C+Peru

Nepal: Samriddhi, The Prosperity Foundation



Organization: Samriddhi, The Prosperity Foundation is registered under the Company Act of Nepal as a not-for-profit organization.¹¹ Samriddhi’s mission is to promote ideas of freedom- civil, political and economic- through public policy recommendations (based on independent research), educational programs and public participation for a free and prosperous Nepal.

Year youth program founded: 2009

Youth program: Young people in Nepal are not taught the benefits of entrepreneurship and market-oriented economies in universities. In fact, free market concepts are generally perceived as “a bad thing,” given the country’s history of Maoist influence. Samriddhi’s Arthalaya program aims to remedy this problem by: 1) changing the mindset of young people about market-oriented economy and 2) training university students with concepts that encourage a greater appreciation for entrepreneurship and businesses. Arthalaya is a five-day training workshop that teaches Nepali youth the necessary skills to become entrepreneurs, create new opportunities, and inject new ideas into Nepal’s economy. Selected through a rigorous application process, participants are undergraduate and graduate students from various parts of Nepal.

- *Education:* The program includes workshops that help young people understand the importance of entrepreneurship, as well as the regulatory requirements to create a business. Activities include: mock debates, business simulations, policy discussions, case studies, and expert lectures. Topics

of discussion include: Possibilities for a Prosperous Nepal; Rule of Law and the Business Climate; Incentives and Human Resources Management; Government Policies on Markets; How Markets Function; The Role of Government; and Leadership Skills.

- *Application of Skills:* Supplementing the theoretical knowledge that students gain from the workshops, Arthalaya students also engage in a business simulation. During the simulation, students run a business of their own where 24 participants are consumers and few students serve as vendors. In this market, students come up with innovative ideas to cater to the needs of the consumers and make profits. The simulation also adds policy issues that real business faces, such as progressive tax system, excessive taxation on certain goods along with forced strikes. This exercise helps students internalize the importance of the issues discussed from the workshops.
- *Mentorship & Networking:* A key component of Arthalaya is sustaining the enthusiasm and keeping the youth engaged after they finish the training program. To this end, the program has encouraged networking and mentorship. Upon returning to schools, Arthalaya graduates have started entrepreneurship clubs at their affiliated universities

In Nepal, the Arthalaya program teaches students the necessary skills to become entrepreneurs and then gives them an opportunity to apply these skills through a business simulation.

to share and educate entrepreneurship issues with their fellow students. The clubs screen documentaries, organize talks with leading entrepreneurs, and also publish newsletters covering issues and events related to entrepreneurship. Arthalaya graduates are matched with mentors from successful entrepreneurs affiliated with Nepal Business Forum for three to six months right after completing the Arthalaya program to gain more practical advice and feedback.

Application process: For each Arthalaya 24 participants are selected. College going students are selected as participant and their age will be in between 18 to 26. Selection process is carried out in the various stages. Group of selection committee is formed, and they are responsible for the selection of the participants. The first step in the process is the call for applications. Applications for the program are solicited through different print and electronic media. After the applications are received, there is a short listing process. The short listing is done based on the qualification presented by the applicants. An application form is developed to assess the participants' level of knowledge and interest in entrepreneurship. During the selection process, due consideration is given to recommendations made by earlier Arthalaya graduates. This is done so that a team conducive to forming Entrepreneurship Clubs will be trained and ready to take the club forward. Participants from diverse background are maintained; participants range from undergraduate and graduate students in Environment to Management and Economics from both private and public institutions. The selection is followed by small group discussions amongst the shortlisted candidates. The next step in the process is interviews. Each applicant is interviewed, and the participant's interest and commitment towards learning are analyzed. Final selections are made after the interviews.

Students that graduate from Arthalaya often join entrepreneurship clubs at their affiliated universities to share and discuss entrepreneurship issues with their student bodies.

Funding: Arthalaya's funding comes from participation fees, as well as local donations from individuals, corporations, and universities who see the potential to influence youth and improve the future of Nepal's economy.

Impact: To this date, Arthalaya program has produced the following results:

- More than 360 students have graduated from the Arthalaya program since it started in 2009
- Twenty-four Entrepreneurs' Clubs have been formed by Arthalaya graduates in their respective universities
- Over 40 Arthalaya graduates have started their own enterprises, including an event managing company, a travel agency, and a dental and surgical equipment wholesale shop

More information: <http://samriddhi.org/page.php?id=11>

Russia: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of North Ossetia (CCINO)



Organization: Chamber of Commerce and Industry of North Ossetia (CCINO)

Year started: 2009

Youth program: CIPE Russia partnered with seven regional chambers of commerce in the North Caucasus to launch the New Generation program, an entrepreneurship training program for young people who were graduates of technical or vocational schools who are seeking to open their own business and were assisted by these chambers to receive financing for their businesses.

- *Education:* Participants received 100 hours of education on the themes central to successful entrepreneurship: strategic business planning and launching a new enterprise, financial and economic literacy, entrepreneurship in a democratic society, leadership and professional growth, property rights and free market institutions, and democratic institutions and the rule of law. Students are young

In Russia, CCINO partnered with seven regional chambers to provide youth with the skills and access to capital they need to start their own business.

people drawn from trade and technical skills, who may not otherwise have the opportunity for training business and economics, but have the capacity to provide needed services. The programs provide them with both the skills and access to capital – helping them to consider going into business on their own.

Application process: Potential participants are required to apply to the program, explaining why they would like to take part and what entrepreneurial endeavors they hope to undertake following the program. In practice, most are accepted, as the goal is to encourage entrepreneurship among the younger generation. Most importantly, the application process ensures that the potential participants are interested.

Funding: The New Generation program was co-financed by USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the seven partnering chambers of commerce.

Impact: Up to this point, the program and the programs launched by the training of trainers program have taught over 700 young people who aspire to be entrepreneurs. Among many accomplishments of the programs' students, a four-person team of graduates won a grant of 1.2 million rubles (\$41,381) to start a cucumber growing and pickling facility on the site of a former collective farm in the village of Sungzha.

Sri Lanka: Youth Business Sri Lanka (YBSL)



Organization: Youth Business Sri Lanka (YBSL) is an independent organization affiliated with the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce. The objective of Youth Business Sri Lanka (YBSL) is to address socio-economic exclusion of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. To that end, YBSL provides a hybrid program that provides access to credit and mentoring partnerships for youth. The National Secretariat of YBSL is at the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC), and in 2007 CCC led a national expansion strategy for YBSL. The program is an accredited member of Youth Business International (YBI), a global network of independent non-profit organizations that help young people start and grow their businesses.

Year youth program started: 2007

Youth program: YBSL credit is for youth between the ages of 18-35 years to start a business or to fund the next step of an existing enterprise. In order to be eligible for YBSL credit, youth must have a sound business idea and they cannot be eligible for bank loans due to a disadvantaged position, such as social exclusion or lack of collateral. Depending on the capacity of the district program and the availability of credit funds, the district management shall decide, as appropriate, the credit assistance variables, including geographic target area, amount

In Sri Lanka, YBSL is a two-part program that provides access to credit and mentoring partnerships to young entrepreneurs.

of credit, duration of repayment period, grace period, and any follow up loans. For all YBSL programs, initial credit is limited to a maximum of Rs. 50,000.00 – approximately \$380 USD. YBSL must comply with YBI's standard interest rate of 13 percent per annum, which is far lower than the 20-22 percent rates that commercial banks and microfinance institutions offer. The amount is typically expected to be repaid within 12 months, and rates of repayment have been high. Most YBSL loans are for business startups, but depending on the scale and progress of the business, further assistance could be given for expansion and diversification. Beneficiaries are requested to open a bank account and encouraged to operate through a bank, so as to accustom YBSL beneficiaries to the banking system.

YBSL mentors advise on loans, assist with cash flow, and provide advice on good business practices.

Education: Along with Standard Chartered Bank, YBSL has organized financial training programs to create awareness on the procedures of banking requirements and accounting standards. YBSL is regularly advancing into new districts, and has also started training programs for young entrepreneurs with the assistance of “Start and Improve Your Business,” an official skills training package from the International Labor Organization.

Mentorship: In addition to providing credit, YBSL pairs young entrepreneurs with experienced businesspersons who serve as their mentors. Mentoring is integrated into the support services offered by YBSL. It is valuable for youth because they need business advice, and because mentors inculcate a sense of responsibility to YBSL, thereby facilitating credit recovery. Applicants either request mentors from past years, or a Mentor Committee or the Program Manager selects them as appropriate given the applicants' background and nature of their business.

The roles of mentors include:

- Maintaining monthly contact with mentees for the first twelve months of their loan, and then quarterly conversations during any future loans
- Monitoring the progress of the young entrepreneurs' business and identifying any problems in projects' early stages
- Assisting the young entrepreneurs with cash flow and the completion of their monthly progress reports
- Offering advice, or seeking help from other sources and directing youth to do the same
- Attending meetings and seminars arranged by district program offices in order to share experiences with other mentors
- Advising on expansion loans where necessary

All applicants for loans must be able to demonstrate skills, technical competence, and experience in the business proposed, and must have completed an appropriate training course.

Application process: All applicants for loans should conform to the following eligibility criteria: be between 18-35 years old and not attending school at the time of receiving funds; be a resident of the district for more than 3 years; be able to clearly demonstrate inability to raise necessary finance from banks, their relatives, or public and private sources; be able to

demonstrate skills, technical competence, and experience in the business proposed; have completed an appropriate training course; not be employed in an established organization in the public or private sector; and be able to demonstrate that they are from a "less fortunate" background or circumstances, as defined by YBSL.

In exceptional circumstances a young employed person may be considered, provided they are able to justify at least two of the "less fortunate" criteria and fulfill the remaining eligibility criteria. The purpose of this exception is to support young

people who want to leave a very low paying job or part-time employment in order to try and better their quality of life through self-employment. The evaluation of the socio-economic background of the applicant examines factors such as gender, status as an ethnic minority, displacement, disability, access to education, availability of family networks, income, and number of dependents. While these specific candidate groups determine YBSL's target audience, being categorized into a target group does not fulfill eligibility to participate in YBSL programs, as not all individuals in the target areas will be less fortunate. Furthermore, access to higher education does not prohibit participation and individuals will be considered on merit.

Funding: YBSL has secured funds both through donor support through program fees and through the returns on the loans provided to participants. International Alert (IA), an international nongovernmental organization, supported YBSL in its initial phases and in its recruitment for a national Program Manager for the operation of the YBSL Secretariat. IA also supported the preparation of the YBSL manual, which incorporates the procedures and protocols of implementing district YBSL programs. The Office of the International Labor Organization in Sri Lanka supported YBSL by engaging YBSL to do mentorship programs, advising on mentor training programs, and funding YBSL to print a manual for mentors. Business for Peace Alliance (BPA) provided much needed documentary compiling and translation support for the YBSL Secretariat. CACCI Foundation supports YBSL's expansion, and discussions are underway with the Sampath Bank Plc for enhancing the credit fund with an endowment from their microcredit banking division. Further support is expected from British Asia Trust, the United Kingdom, and local businesses' Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives.

Impact: To date, YBSL has disbursed over LKR 37 million in loans to help support over 700 youth entrepreneurs in the districts of Trincomalee, Jaffna, Kandy, Kegalle and Badulla.

More information: <http://www.chamber.lk/projects/youth-business-sri-lanka.html>

5

Other Types of Youth Employment Programs

While this guidebook has focused primarily on youth entrepreneurship programs, there are other types of program options for chambers and business associations wishing to address youth unemployment. They include education and personal development programs, job fairs, and job-matching programs. These programs use similar practical lessons as entrepreneurship programs, and also draw upon the same components of education, application of skills, mentorship, and networking.

Professional development

Professional development programs are an important part of many youth entrepreneurship programs, but they can also be the primary focus of a program. Choosing an educational program versus an entrepreneurship program depends on what issue an organization wants to solve, the capacity of the organization, and the needs of both youth and the business community.

American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic: Linking Higher Education and the Private Sector

For example, in the Kyrgyz Republic higher education was not giving students the skills needed to compete for private sector jobs. To address this issue, CIPE partnered with the American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic (AmCham) to lessen the gap between what students learn in classrooms and what is expected of them in the job market.

Training sessions, mentorship, and educational policy reform were the three main components of the AmCham project. AmCham conducted training sessions for university officials in order to help create career development centers at universities in Bishkek. As a result of this initiative, 10 universities in Bishkek now have new or improved career development centers. Students also attended career development lectures led by AmCham staff at their schools, and they visited offices of AmCham member companies to meet with their executives. This portion of the program was popular and benefited both sides who were involved: students were inspired by meeting successful business executives, and some were offered internship opportunities. On the other hand, companies were exposed to young, promising talent that could contribute to their companies in the future.

The AmCham in Kyrgyz Republic facilitated visits between local students and their member companies, inspiring students and providing companies with potential new employees.

Finally, AmCham facilitated dialogue between policymakers, universities, and the private sector to address how these actors can work together to prepare university students with private sector-oriented skills. This was the first time that the public, private, and civil society sectors all came together to talk about the educational gap in the Kyrgyz Republic.¹²

American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago: National Youth Productivity Forum (NYPF)

In another example, the American Chamber of Commerce of Trinidad and Tobago (AmCham T&T) recognized that productivity in the workplace was deteriorating and that to reverse the negative development, there would have to be a cultural shift in behaviors and skills development. AmCham

T&T founded the National Youth Productivity Forum (NYPF) in 2009 to improve the country's competitiveness, productivity, and work ethic, starting with young people (ages 16 to 19). To that end, through the NYPF, AmCham T&T coordinates various activities for students that help them hone these skills.

Every year the NYPF organizes its activities around a particular theme, the first of which was "Productivity." In the first year, 70 students participated in the NYPF. At the end of the inaugural program, high-achieving students drafted a Productivity Pledge to represent the personal commitment of each student who participated in the Forum. In that pledge, participants promised to continue being productive citizens, both in school and at home. Students also pledged to maintain their commitments throughout their education and later in the workplace.

The NYPF has three main components: discussion rounds, an E-forum, and a school or business project. Twenty secondary schools from the North, South, East, and Central regions of Trinidad and Tobago

The AmCham T&T utilizes an E-Forum Facebook page to allow young people to network and develop research and writing skills.

register and participate in five discussion rounds. There are preliminary rounds of discussions, as well as a final round for the best-performing teams from each region. The interactive E-Forum Facebook page allows young people to network with each other

and develops their research and writing skills. Over 800 students are following the E-Forum page, and is a very popular tool for students to network and share their ideas with one another. For the school project component, schools participate by submitting projects that students have successfully implemented in their schools and communities. The process of implementing and evaluating the impact of a project, as well as submitting it to the NYPF, encourages students to think about their own productivity and their abilities to meet deadlines.

Finally, AmCham T&T's Business Incubator Committee and the NEXT Corporation, a consulting company, provide free a training program in entrepreneurial studies and business plan writing. This training program is open to all young entrepreneurs, even those who are not participating in the NYPF.

While educational development and reform are the targets of these projects, they also indirectly support young entrepreneurs. Educational programs can serve as a stepping stone not only for young people to join the work force, but also as a foundation for gaining the skills needed to one day start a business. Moreover, by addressing the institutional aspects of youth unemployment the program worked towards a better business environment for employees and employers – including new businesses – alike.

Job fairs and matching programs

Addressing youth unemployment can be as simple as connecting employers with qualified youth. Bringing these groups together, either through a job fair, internship, or one-on-one employment counseling can give youth the opening they need, while also assisting businesses to expand their applicant pool and find the best talent. Employment is often the first step towards becoming an entrepreneur or business owner. Job fairs and similar programs thus play a role in making the business environment more conducive to entrepreneurship. Following are two examples of such programs.

American Chamber of Commerce in Albania

The American Chamber of Commerce in Albania (AmCham Albania) has hosted job fairs in Tirana since 2001. The job fairs typically take place in May so that university graduates may take advantage of them to find employment, and approximately 20 companies participate each year.

In setting up the job fairs, AmCham Albania reaches out to companies to find out what kinds of openings they have and then consolidates that information and circulates it so that

participants can sign up for appointments and interviews. This system reduces the noise level at the job fair and allows for conversations to be more productive. Companies pay €200 to participate in the job fairs, and there is no limit to how many positions each company can promote at the fair. AmCham's job fair is typically less costly than similar job fairs put on by the federal government, charging companies up to €1.700 to participate in 2012. AmCham Albania does not look to make a profit from its job fairs, and it often uses private sponsorship money only to offset costs.

To help university graduates find employment, AmCham Albania hosts job fairs that include about 20 companies and up to 150 students.

After every fair, AmCham Albania's Human Resources committee meets to discuss lessons learned and strategize for the following year's event. From these meetings, AmCham identified a need for job interview preparation, and initiated a conference on HR issues yearly and training program for young people who are

inexperienced with job interviews. Students can also take part in practice interviews. The training program takes place the day before the job fair to help participants prepare. AmCham has co-hosted this program with companies and also with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the number of students participating has ranged from 50 to 150.¹³

The Hellenic Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Hellenic Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (HACCI) promotes and strengthens the economic and cultural ties between Australia and Greece. Since the early 1990s, HACCI has broadened its scope beyond its traditional commercial mandate and in 2011, HACCI initiated its internship program. The HACCI Internship Program links young people, predominantly of Greek descent, to businesses, professionals, and other organizations that offer internships. In addition to

education, work experience, and mentoring with employing organizations, interns also benefit from support and mentoring from HACCI during their internships. To participate, prospective interns apply for positions and upload their CV on the HACCI website. The Internship Program Committee invites applicants to meet with one of its members in person for an informal interview. Following the interview, suitable prospective interns that fulfill the requisite criteria set by host organizations are sent to the host organization for consideration, who then determines if they want to interview the candidate.

For host organizations, the HACCI Internship Program simplifies recruitment processes because HACCI reviews and interviews all candidates before the host organizations do. For interns, the program facilitates the attainment of valuable work skills and experience. Interns also receive a certificate of completion at the annual HACCI Excellence Awards, when businesses and individuals are recognized for their excellence and contributions to the Hellenic community. Internships sometimes lead to full-time jobs, and indeed the legal firm that hired HACCI's first intern subsequently offered that intern a full time position. To date, there have been four HACCI interns. As the Internship Program grows, HACCI intends to strengthen the Internship Program's presence throughout Greek student networks by its use of social media and through its connections with universities and post graduate education institutions.¹⁴

The HACCI Internship Program links young people to businesses, professionals, and other organizations that offer internships and provides mentoring and support to interns.

Just like educational programs, job fairs and matching programs can address youth unemployment, serving the needs of both youth and the business community. As seen in the cases from Albania and Australia, they can make the job search process easier for employers and potential employees.



Additional Resources

The list below includes a number of resources and publications on entrepreneurship programs in general, and youth programs more specifically. While not all are chamber-sponsored, these resources offer further insights and information on youth entrepreneurship programs.

SBA.GOV

U.S. Small Business Administration

The United States Congress created the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to aid and counsel the concerns of small businesses. The SBA has several websites for young entrepreneurs, including a special page for Young Entrepreneurs (<http://www.sba.gov/content/young-entrepreneurs>), and Teen Business Link (<http://archive.sba.gov/teens/>). Those websites clarify the legal requirements for starting a business, as well as provide general advice.

Greater Grads Internship Handbook

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

The Greater Grads Internship Handbook provides a step-by-step outline for employers who are developing internship opportunities within their organizations. The Handbook explains why businesses can benefit from effective internship programs, and covers topics such as identifying business needs, developing intern job descriptions, recruitment, hiring, and management. It also provides sample interview questions, application forms, and performance evaluation documents.

[http://www.greatergrads.com/clientuploads/pdf/
EmployerHandbook_3_2012.pdf](http://www.greatergrads.com/clientuploads/pdf/EmployerHandbook_3_2012.pdf)

Youth Apprenticeship Program Handbook

Partners in Education, Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce

Partners in Education uses a handbook to explain expectations and procedures to participants in the Youth Apprenticeship program. The handbook explains required paperwork, grading, the program schedule, attendance policies, and proper attire, among other things.

<http://www.titletown.org/media/73554/program%20handbook%202009-2011.doc>

Final Report on Motivation Schemes for Employers

Noorte tööhõive project, Estonia

This report highlights the problems and obstacles faced by companies in the recruitment of personnel, especially amongst young unemployed people. It also analyzes potential motivation and incentive schemes that employers could utilize to support youth employment, and highlights recommendations based on a youth employment project in Estonia.

<http://www.bda.ee/docsyouth/Final%20report%20on%20motivation%20schemes%20for%20employers.pdf>

World Youth Report

United Nations

Based largely on an e-discussion with young people and representatives of youth-led organizations about the transition from schools and training institutions into the world of work, this report provides both background information on various topics related to youth employment.

<http://unworldyouthreport.org/media/pdfs/WYR2011.pdf>

Endnotes

¹After contacting representatives from more than 30 chambers and business associations in different countries with detailed questions about their existing youth programs, CIPE compiled summary case studies of each program where sufficient information was available. By comparing these case studies side-by-side, common themes and trends emerged.

² Entrepreneurship Programs, CIPE, Accessed 9/10/12, <http://www.cipe.org/publications/detail/entrepreneurship-programs-cipe>

³“Kauffman Global Scholars Program,” Kauffman Foundation, Accessed 9/10/12, <http://www.kauffman.org/entrepreneurship/global-entrepreneurship.aspx>

⁴ “Young Entrepreneurs,” U.S. Small Business Administration, Accessed 9/10/12, <http://www.sba.gov/content/young-entrepreneurs>

⁵ “The Caterpillar Foundation and IYF Launch Entrepreneurship Initiative,” International Youth Foundation, July 18, 2011, Accessed 9/10/12, <http://www.iyfnet.org/news/1756>

⁶ Youth Entrepreneurship Program – California, Accessed 9/14/2012, <http://www.yepcalifornia.com/>

⁷ Majid Shabbir, “Youth in Entrepreneurship and Democracy,” CIPE Development Blog, September 11, 2012, <http://www.cipe.org/blog/2012/09/11/youth-in-entrepreneurship-and-democracy>

⁸ “5 Reasons Why Mentors are so Important to Entrepreneurs,” DCU Ryan Academy for Entrepreneurship, November 3, 2010, Accessed 9/13/12, <http://ryanacademy.wordpress.com/2010/11/03/5-reasons-why-mentors-are-so-important-to-entrepreneurs/>

⁹ Dana Damato, “The Importance of Networking for New Entrepreneurs,” Chamber Insights, The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, July 13, 2011, Accessed 9/13/12, <http://www.chamberofcommerce.com/business-advice/marketing-research/the-importance-of-networking-for-new-entrepreneurs-263/>

¹⁰ NOTE: Instituto Invertir and the EmprendeAhora program are not affiliated with a chamber of commerce or business association. However, EmprendeAhora includes many successful components of a youth entrepreneurship program that chambers and business associations may find useful.

¹¹ About Us, Samriddhi, <http://www.samriddhi.org/page.php?id=1>

¹² More information: <http://www.amcham.kg/> or http://amcham.kg/files/Newsletter_Feb_2012_eng.pdf

¹³ More information: <http://www.amcham.com.al/index-en.php>, or http://www.amcham.com.al/calendar/J_Fair-en.php

¹⁴ More information: <http://www.hacci.com.au/index.php?sectionID=242&pageID=1027056/-/v58l6lz/-/index.html>



Center for International Private Enterprise

1155 15th Street NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20005

telephone: (202) 721-9200

fax: (202) 721-9250

www.cipe.org

cipe@cipe.org