



International
Labour
Organization

► How to set up and run a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship: a practical handbook



- ▶ **How to set up and run a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship: a practical handbook**

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How to set up and run a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship: A practical handbook (International Labour Organization, 2021)

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What is a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship?

A business coalition for youth entrepreneurship is a group of businesses and like-minded groups that work together to promote and support youth who own or want to start their own enterprise. The business coalition can take many forms, and there is no one-size-fits-all model. Some coalitions establish as a committee or council under a national employers' and business membership organization (EBMO). Some establish themselves as a separate entity, with membership in a national EBMO, while others form on an ad hoc basis as a collective intended to deliver specific objectives or activities and disband after achieving the result. Regardless what form a business coalition takes in any given context, its aims are universal:

- ▶ undertake advocacy and lobbying for policy change to improve the business environment for youth entrepreneurs;
- ▶ support, empower and improve the innovative entrepreneurial capabilities of youth entrepreneurs;
- ▶ facilitate the exchange of ideas, experiences, best practices and joint actions with and among youth entrepreneurs;
- ▶ promote networking opportunities for youth entrepreneurs at local, national, regional and international levels;
- ▶ increase the visibility of youth entrepreneurs and facilitate dialogue between them, policymakers and the wider business community;
- ▶ provide information and services that assist youth entrepreneurs to grow their businesses and succeed; and
- ▶ undertake collaborative programmes and joint actions that support youth entrepreneurs.

Who should use this handbook?

This handbook has been developed as a practical guide for employers' and business membership organizations or any organization or stakeholder aiming to promote, support and empower youth entrepreneurs. It provides step-by-step guidance with examples and best practices on how to establish a sustainable business coalition, including the business model, membership strategy, financial resources, advocacy, communication and marketing, services, inclusion of women entrepreneurs and measuring performance.

Acknowledgements

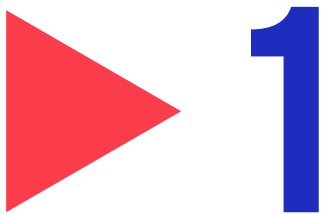
We thank the researchers, Miaw Tiang Tang and Avinit Narayan, for their collaboration to elaborate this guide. The International Labour Organization (ILO) is grateful for their expertise and professionalism throughout the assignment.

The contributions of employers' and business membership organizations through the sharing of experience with and insights on structure and operations were instrumental to the development of this guide. In particular, we extend our appreciation to the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Cambodia, the National Commission for Young Entrepreneurs Mexico, the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation and the Youth Entrepreneurs Council of Solomon Islands for their inputs.

We also acknowledge the International Training Centre of the ILO for its *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package and in particular the guide on *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization*. This youth entrepreneurship guide has been enriched by drawing extensively on this series.

Finally, we extend our thanks to ILO colleagues who provided coordination, peer review and made technical contributions to this guide: Wade Bromley, Dong Eung Lee, Felix Weidenkaff and Edward Bernard. We thank these colleagues for their time and important contributions.





What is the business case for taking action?

Youth unemployment and vulnerability

Today, there are approximately 1.3 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24.¹ Young adults are the backbone and potential of every society, providing energy, ideas and innovation. Yet, youth unemployment is a global concern of governments, businesses and stakeholders in developed and developing economies.

Globally, youth employment fell by 8.7 per cent in 2020, compared with the 3.7 per cent decline in employment for adults between October 2020 and April 2021.² Unemployment affects 67.6 million young people, with the number varying dramatically by region. Around 267 million young people (aged 15–24) are not in employment, education or training, and many more endure substandard working conditions.³

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on youth. The policies responding to the pandemic have resulted in economic shut down, leaving millions of workers out of work, with young people, women and less-skilled people the worst affected. The crisis has been particularly severe for youth across three

¹ ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth: Technology and the Future of Jobs* (2020).

² ILO, *Statistical Brief: An Update on the Youth Labour Market Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis* (2020), www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/-ed_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_795479.pdf.

³ *ibid.*

dimensions: (i) disruptions to education, training and work-based learning; (ii) increased difficulties for young jobseekers and new labour market entrants; and (iii) job and income losses, along with deteriorating quality of employment.⁴ The dire economic and labour market situations are severely affecting young people's mental health and well-being.⁵

Self-employment and entrepreneurship are routes that young people can use to expand their options. Instead of becoming a jobseeker, they can set up a new enterprise, which is a pivotal solution for creating new jobs and providing job opportunities for other youth.

 **Self-employed youth are vulnerable to the cessation of economic activity [due to the pandemic-related lockdowns and other containment measures] because they lack financial resources to weather such a downturn. They are also likely to have weaker access to information and support schemes available for businesses.**

► Source: ILO, *Statistical Brief: An Update on the Youth Labour Market Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis* (2020), www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_795479.pdf.

Promoting employment

Promoting entrepreneurship and enterprise creation is high on the policy agenda of most governments. It is seen as a mechanism to address development challenges and contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Entrepreneurship can be a transformational driver for attaining and delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while fuelling economic growth.⁶ Youth entrepreneurship and self-employment are also recognized as a thematic area of action to advance the objective of the United Nations Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.⁷ The 2019–2020 *Global Entrepreneurship Monitor* report details how these challenging economic times can ignite entrepreneurship and jumpstart job creation. But it requires a business environment that provides the ground for entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to promote and generate employment.

The world's different nations view entrepreneurial activities differently, following their prevailing culture towards entrepreneurship. Promoting a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship is increasingly becoming the policy of governments wanting to generate more employment through enterprise creation. In this context, youth entrepreneurship programmes are promoted in schools and communities around the world to raise awareness and equip youth with relevant skills. Programmes also have evolved within the informal economy, targeting potential youth entrepreneurs and unemployed, out-of-school or at-risk youth.

Interventions have been designed and implemented by a range of providers, including public agencies, intergovernmental and bilateral technical assistance partners, the private sector and non-government organizations in various settings. Many of these interventions emphasize activities that nurture the skills and creativity of youth that will make them more employable but will also prepare them to set up their own business with the potential to provide employment and income-generating opportunities.

4 ILO, *Statistical Brief: An Update on the Youth Labour Market Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis* (2020), www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/briefingnote/wcms_795479.pdf.

5 See https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_753060/lang-en/index.htm.

6 Particularly referring to SDGs 1, 8 and 10.

7 See <https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Thematic-Plan-5-Youth-entrepreneurship.pdf>.

Growing the economy

Globally, self-employed and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) account for 70 per cent of total employment.⁸ This finding highlights the importance of promoting an enabling environment for entrepreneurship with the objectives of job creation, poverty alleviation and economic development. Innovative entrepreneurs also are vital for development because they introduce new ways of thinking, working and solving problems, with their products and services expanding the private sector and contributing to economic diversification.

Entrepreneurs provide the engine of economic growth and have been the backbone of every economic recovery. Entrepreneurial activities reinforce the dynamics of growth. The benefits for economic growth will be more significant when entrepreneurs can operate flexibly, develop their ideas and reap the rewards. Policies that favour enterprise creation and enterprise expansion will amplify the process of economic growth and create new and more employment, which is needed to absorb the young people entering the labour market.

There are various challenges in starting and running a business, more for young people who may have an innovative idea and energy but lack capital, experience, skills, market access and networks. To facilitate the growth of youth entrepreneurship, it is essential to have an enabling regulatory environment and policies and programmes that are conducive to young people starting and running a business.

Youth entrepreneurs and employers' and business membership organizations

An economy seeking to encourage entrepreneurship needs to have a favourable environment for youth entrepreneurs. This likely will require reforms and changes to the labour and financial regulations to improve the climate for starting and running a business, for encouraging new ideas and innovations and for catching up with technological changes. There is no point in promoting entrepreneurship as an option for young people if the costs and regulatory requirements for starting a new enterprise are prohibitive or unrewarding.

Most employers' and business membership organizations (EBMOs) support the growth of entrepreneurship through advocacy and lobbying for reform and an environment that is conducive for enterprise growth. National and regional youth entrepreneurship-oriented EBMOs can take a critical role in the private sector ecosystem in promoting an enabling environment for youth entrepreneurship.

An EBMO can also provide direct services to youth entrepreneurs, such as business advice, consultancy, guidance and information. It can serve as a platform for information exchanges and networking for youth entrepreneurs. The expanded membership and services generate new sources of income and enhance EBMO representativeness and credibility as the voice of the private sector.

Preparing the next generation for future EBMO leadership

Youth entrepreneurs and employers are the next generation of members and leaders in the business community; their early engagement in national, regional or sector-based EBMOs opens up opportunities to expand their capacities, experiences, networks and leadership.

In addition to encouraging youth entrepreneurs to be part of its membership, an EBMO may also motivate young business leaders and entrepreneurs to take up leadership roles. This can be done through their direct involvement in EBMO governance or through the formation of a youth entrepreneur council or committees within an EBMO. It can also work as an independent business coalition for youth entrepreneurship affiliated with an EBMO. The direct or indirect relationship or affiliation with an EBMO allows young business leaders to take part in EBMO strategy decisions and policy advocacy. It provides a platform for experienced business leaders to identify, train and mentor potential youth entrepreneurs to be future business leaders.

⁸ See https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_723282.pdf.

Focusing on youth entrepreneurship encourages diversification and innovation as well as knowledge-sharing. In addition to long-term leadership contributions, these youth professionals also inject fresh and innovative ideas into EBMO strategies, helping the organizations keep aligned with evolving social norms and trends. The diversity of businesses among members also creates opportunities for collaboration and innovation for EBMOs in terms of better strategies and lean organizational structure and operations, among other things.

Importance of business coalitions

A business coalition, which is an independent initiative established and managed by a group of individual businesses, has emerged as an ideal platform for like-minded enterprises to come together to support and promote youth entrepreneurship. A coalition should advocate a business environment that is conducive for youth entrepreneurship. It should undertake collaborative and joint actions to implement programmes and activities that support youth entrepreneurs and facilitate the exchange of experiences, networking and sharing of good practices. It should also facilitate dialogue with policymakers and provide information and services to youth entrepreneurs. If correctly set up and managed, a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship can develop into an effective platform for youth entrepreneurs to grow, support and motivate each other. And it can take an active role in influencing policy decisions that broaden youth entrepreneurship development.

 Young entrepreneurs are looking for something new. They want access to a platform that enables them to do partnerships, networking, innovation, information, capacity-building at the regional and global levels.

► Sambath Bun, Executive Director – Young Entrepreneurs Association of Cambodia



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How should a sustainable business model be developed for youth coalitions to promote and support youth entrepreneurs?

Why is sustainability important?

The objectives of a business coalition for youth entrepreneurs (BCYE) are naturally aligned with and will contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 and SDG 8.



SDG target 4.4

“By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.”



SDG target 8.3

“Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services.”

Like most businesses, the enterprises launched by youth typically begin on a micro, small or possibly medium scale. Given the resource and capacity constraints that youth typically experience, many of these enterprises struggle with challenges to growth and remain an MSME for an extended period.

The importance of MSMEs should not be discounted. MSMEs are an essential part of the equation as agents for and beneficiaries of inclusive development. In most countries, MSMEs are the main drivers of economic growth and employment creation.⁹ They are also important facilitators of income-generation, poverty eradication and inequality reduction, including for disadvantaged groups.

Like the businesses they represent, BCYEs will encounter many challenges after launching. Without appropriate resources and support, they may fail in the first two years. It is critical that any new initiative invest in a well-researched business plan with a dedicated strategy for achieving sustainability.

How can sustainability be achieved?

Experience has shown that one of the factors to achieving a sustainable BCYE is to anchor the new initiative in a growth mindset. This is best done by activating and empowering a network of committed youth entrepreneurs to take ownership for decision-making and operations from the outset. Although more experienced business leaders and EBMO staff are important for mentoring new initiatives, youth entrepreneurs' passion, drive and energy will give an initiative its own unique identity and come to act as a gravitational pull that other youth entrepreneurs will be drawn to. This is particularly important when considering resources and funding.

There are various ways of generating resources and funding depending on the circumstances and national context of a BCYE, as described in Chapter 4 (see "Financial resources").

Empowering youth entrepreneurs to lead a new initiative is important. It is also critical that this process engenders a diversity of representation, with more experienced and successful youth joining together with new business owners and those who may be struggling in different ways. Regardless of the background of members, it is important that everyone is on board with the common objectives to strengthen entrepreneurship, support each other and create positive changes and vibrant communities.

The full support of the governance board of an EBMO and the commitment and passion of the founding members of a BCYE are essential for the success and sustainability of the BCYE.

Good governance and sustainability of a bcye

Just as with an EBMO, a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship is generally established **by the private sector for the private sector**. The difference is that it is for a specific private sector cluster – youth entrepreneurs. Thus, it is accountable for its results to that particular group, which stands to benefit directly.

Like any organization, good governance is critical to the credibility and sustainability of a BCYE. Good governance exists when a BCYE has systems and processes in place that are appropriate to its circumstances and that enable the organization to be viable, pursue its purpose effectively and meet its obligations under the law.

As featured in the International Labour Organization's (ILO) *Onboarding Handbook for Board Members of Small Employer and Business Membership Organizations*, the principles of good governance also apply within a BCYE:

- **Fiduciary responsibility.** This responsibility arises from a relationship of trust and confidence and carries an obligation to avoid conflict, the duty to not make a profit and the duty to not gain personal benefit or a benefit for a third party.

⁹ See https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_723282/lang-en/index.htm.

- **Legal duty.** Although BCYEs do not typically experience legal problems, failure to follow legal requirements can lead to penalties and reputational damage. A legally incorporated organization must comply with the following four legal duties:
 - act in good faith in the best interests of the BCYE and for a proper purpose;
 - act with reasonable care, skill and diligence;
 - do not improperly use information or position; and
 - disclose and manage conflicts of interest.
- **Compliance.** Complying with all aspects of a BCYE's internal processes and procedures is essential. Amending a policy to ensure a more effective outcome sends a clear message that the BCYE takes governance seriously and is not prepared to sidestep issues that might negatively affect its credibility or reputation.
- **Transparency.** This is the principle of allowing those affected by administrative decisions to know the facts and figures that informed any process that resulted in those decisions.

To learn more about good governance, see the [Onboarding Handbook for Board Members of Small Employer and Business Membership Organizations](#) and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC-ILO) guide to [Designing and Implementing Sound Governance Practices in Employer and Business Membership Organizations](#).

The following organizational structures are essential elements needed to ensure good governance and ultimately contribute to the sustainability of such an initiative.

Independent governing board

Given that a BCYE is by the private sector for the private sector, it is necessary to have an independent governing board to oversee and guide the development and governance of the coalition. Ideally, the board should comprise committed and passionate youth entrepreneurs and a few experienced business leaders willing to contribute their advice and support. It is helpful to include experienced and interested business leaders from the national EBMO, although it is not advisable for these individuals to be office bearers, such as chair, vice chair, treasurer, etc.

The primary tasks of the board will be similar to those of the EBMO board:

- develop and agree on long-term goals and annual objectives and strategies;
- set an annual financial budget;
- oversee the formulation and implementation of strategies to achieve the goals and objectives;
- engage a secretariat and manage its performance;
- set targets within a specified time frame by way of key performance indicators;
- monitor performance against key performance indicators and the annual budget; and
- ensure that appropriate governance and financial controls are in place.

Many BCYEs will initially be launched under board management without a dedicated secretariat. In the early days of an initiative, this may necessitate the BCYE president or chairperson taking on a more hybrid role, with the responsibilities typically performed by a CEO and with other board members asked to take a more hands-on role in the delivery of certain operations, such as service provision.

Board committees

Because board members are unpaid and will typically be busy business professionals, it may be unlikely that the board meets frequently. For this reason, it can be helpful to form subcommittees, such as an audit committee, a policy committee and a marketing committee, with each led by an appointed chairperson who reports to the board. Committees also provide an opportunity for the BCYE to tap into the expertise of experienced entrepreneurs and to possibly prepare them for future board positions. It is not a must, however, to form

subcommittees, especially for a newly established BCYE or one with a small membership. The subcommittee can be created in the later stage when membership has expanded.

Committees also provide opportunities to develop knowledge within the organization. Board members can focus their skills in areas that will most benefit the organization. Conversely, the committees help develop leadership talent and support a leadership pipeline. Additionally, the existence of committees can indicate to general members and stakeholders that the board is taking particular issues seriously. There may be committees established for a relatively short period of time (for example, building committees) and then disbanded when no longer required.

Chairperson

A success factor for thriving BCYEs is that the chairperson is a well-respected and well-connected member of the national business community. This person should be a business-owning youth and elected according to their leadership abilities. Other success criteria include a strong personal commitment to the goals and objectives of the BCYE, private sector experience, good relations with the government and, perhaps most importantly, a role model with ability to attract new members.

Desired competencies for a chairperson

- ▶ Strong critical and strategic thinking. An effective chairperson will be quick to identify opportunities and potential risks facing the BCYE.
- ▶ Ability to make quality and informed decisions based on relevant information available to the board, particularly from committees and management. A chairperson needs to ensure clear decisions are reached.
- ▶ Effective communication skills and ability to influence others. A chairperson must be able to invite and listen to different viewpoints, understand how to constructively challenge ideas and move views without allowing personality or rank to dominate.
- ▶ Strong organizational skills. A chairperson needs to oversee and manage committees, potentially also a secretariat, to ensure that agreed actions are carried out and to hold members accountable.
- ▶ Strong ethics and comfort with accountability. A chairperson needs to ensure that ethical and inclusive practices are consistently applied in accordance with the BCYE's policies and guidelines. And the chairperson needs to be comfortable with personal accountability to the BCYE's members and stakeholders.
- ▶ Ability to manage own performance and workload. An effective chairperson will need to manage their own time and resources to ensure that commitments to the BCYE are delivered. This will require the ability to prioritize, coordinate and collaborate.

Secretariat

Other than the governing board and committees, a BCYE should consider what secretariat backing the initiative may require to operate effectively. This entails the substantive and administrative work to be carried out for implementing strategies and objectives.

A chief executive officer (CEO) or executive director typically leads the secretariat, with a team of technical and administration staff to run the day-to-day activities to achieve the desired results. It is common for a newly established BCYE, especially one formed under the auspices of a national EBMO, to utilize the secretariat office and facilities of the EBMO. It may only require recruiting a coordinator to manage the BCYE's activities and key performance indicators, with direction from the chairperson.

For a BCYE that plans to have its own secretariat, it is essential to find the right CEO or executive director to lead that secretariat. The CEO or executive director is responsible for implementing the strategic plan and achieving the key performance indicators. Experience has shown that to succeed, the individual must have:

- proven leadership ability and can work independently;
- a track record in the private sector, including progressing to at least a middle-management role;
- strong interpersonal and communication skills;
- a tertiary education qualification;
- a passion to inspire and support youth entrepreneurs in the country; and
- motivation to lead the development of youth entrepreneurs to succeed in entrepreneurship, generate employment and contribute to the economic growth of the country.

Once the CEO or executive director is in place, other staff can be recruited, depending on the current and projected size of the BCYE and its financial ability. For an expanding BCYE, the next hires would be a communications and membership officer, policy and programme coordinator and an administrative and finance officer. Because an emerging BCYE may not be able to afford all these positions, the CEO or executive director may have to take on one or more of these roles. Or the roles may start with part-time staff or be partially funded by a development agency. To attract qualified and competent people, the remuneration for each position should be competitive with equivalent roles in the private sector.

Different models for a bcye

In principle, a BCYE should be established as a non-profit entity, similar to that of an EBMO. The following are some of the common types of BCYE, depending on the mandates and agendas:

1. Independent BCYE

This is an independently formed, operated and incorporated legal entity with its own board and management and a purpose-oriented structure, mission, vision, constitution and strategy. While it is strategic to have a formal relationship with the national umbrella organizations representing employers and businesses on policy matters, it is not mandatory for an independent BCYE to have such an association. The Australian Young Entrepreneurs Association, the Association of Young Entrepreneurs Seychelles, the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Cambodia and the Indonesian Young Entrepreneurs Association are some examples of an independent BCYE.

2. Associated BCYE

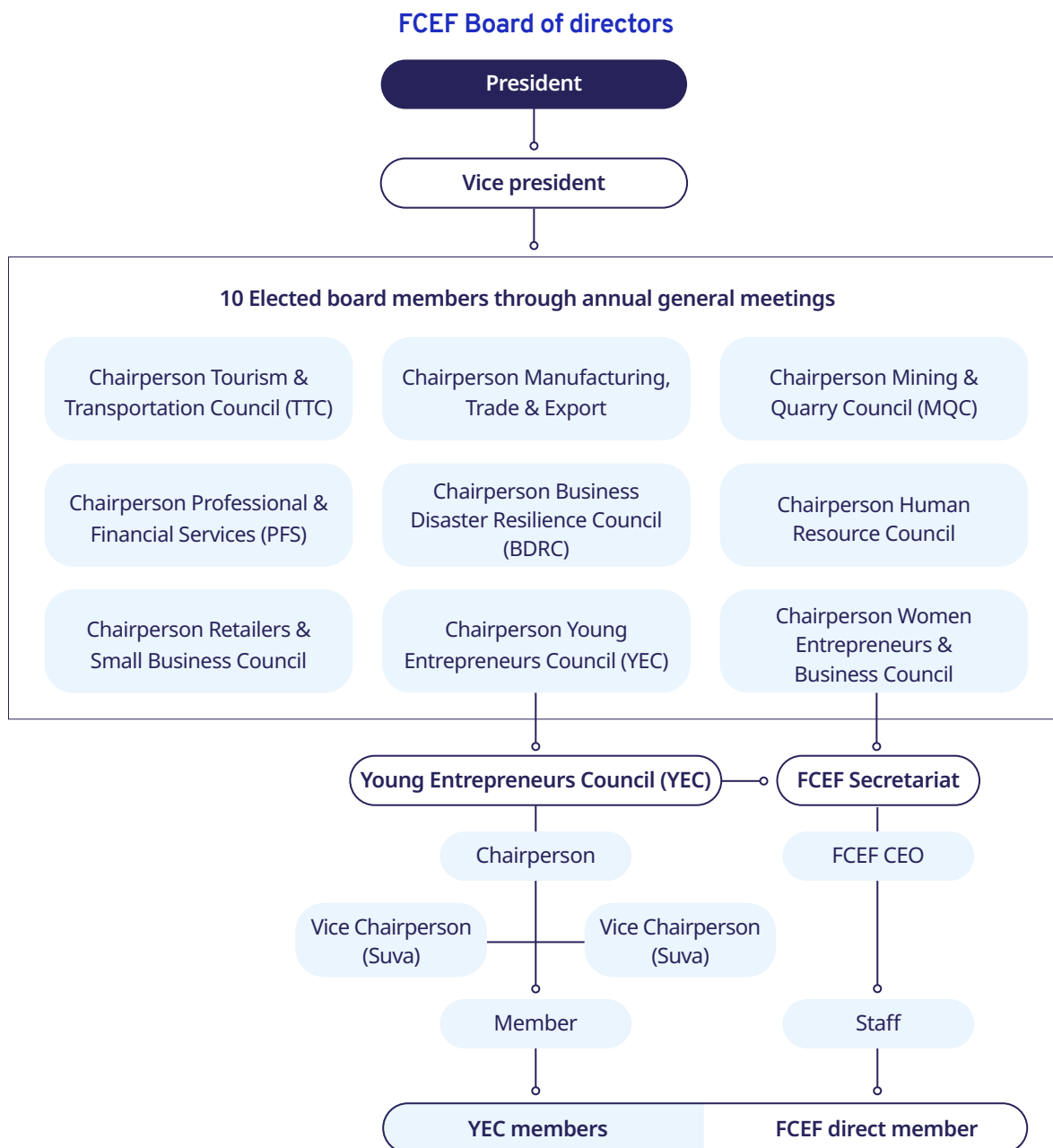
This is an independent organization and legal entity with its own board and management formed by and maintaining affiliation to an established EBMO. Although this type of BCYE is independent in terms of operations and will have its own constitution and bylaws, its vision, mission and strategy tend to be sector-tailored representations of those upheld by the founding EBMO. Members of the associated BCYE may view and be viewed as future members of the “parent” EBMO. The Young Entrepreneurs’ Association of Jamaica, which was established in 2006 under the auspices of the Jamaica Employers’ Federation, is an example of an associate BCYE. It has expanded successfully in advocating and supporting youth entrepreneurs in Jamaica. Another example of an associate BCYE is the Young Entrepreneurs Council of Solomon Islands, established in 2018 under a public-private partnership between the Government and the national EBMO – the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

3. Internal BCYE

This is a structure established by and within an existing EBMO without its own membership, without an independent board and without its own mission, vision, constitution or strategy. It may take the form of a committee or council. As an initiative internal to an established EBMO, the BCYE will have no direct membership of its own. But under a dedicated leadership group, it is tasked with delivering tailored representation, services and support to the youth entrepreneur segment within the membership of the parent EBMO and in line with its long-term strategy. One successful example is the Young Entrepreneurs Council of the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation, which was formed in 2016 to provide a platform for aspiring entrepreneurs to influence the policy positions adopted by the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation and participate directly in the work of the organization with policymakers. One way this is achieved is through the dedication of one seat on the organization’s board to the chairperson of the Young Entrepreneurs Council.

The Young Entrepreneurs Council of Samoa is also an example of a BCYE within an EBMO.

► **Example organizational chart of an internal BCYE: the Fiji Commerce and Employer Federation's Young Entrepreneurs Council**



4. Ad hoc BCYE

This is an informal initiative often formed by a mix of interest groups in response to or focused on a specific objective and disbanded after achieving the result. These BCYEs are established for a short to medium-term time frame and do not establish their own membership, services or management structure. There will usually be a coalition leader organizing the meetings and activities, and in almost all cases, the ad hoc coalition will adopt an official name. Many ad hoc BCYEs are formed as part of a development cooperation project and are disbanded once the project is concluded. While it is not uncommon for an EBMO to join or be involved in the activities of an ad hoc BCYE, ad hoc coalitions tend to be launched by private enterprises or other stakeholders working outside of the EBMO membership. Examples of an ad hoc BCYE include the Yes Youth Can! Initiative in Kenya, the Youth Mean Business initiative in Kosovo and the National Youth Entrepreneurship Award coalition in Singapore. The business model for this type of BCYE is distinct from the other forms. Thus, this guide may not be well suited for its needs.

► Four models of a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship

	Features	Strengths	Weaknesses
Independent	► An independently established organization and legal entity with its own board and management ► Has own constitution, bylaws and direct membership	► Free of interference from organizations with other mandates and agendas ► Specialist status can serve as source of power and influence ► Mandate drawn from and independent membership	► May lack wider support from the business community and be viewed as an “outsider” ► Remoteness from the apex EBMO could reduce capacity to influence the national business agenda or engage in advocacy with the government ► Self-reliance comes at the risk of insufficient income being generated to sustain or scale up work ► Poor leadership can damage the BCYE’s reputation and thus its ability to attract members or scale up work
Internal	► Established by and within an existing EBMO ► Without independent membership or board ► Without its own mission, vision, constitution and strategy ► Tasked with delivering tailored representation, services and support to the youth entrepreneur segment within the membership of the parent EBMO	► Authority and responsibility delegated to those who are closest to youth entrepreneurs ► Strengthens leadership skills of the next generation of EBMO representation ► Specialist status can serve as source of power and influence, as will recognition and support of wider business community ► Lower operational costs, more stable income and easier to get to scale	► Lack of independence and subservience to founding EBMO mandate and business agenda ► Limited room for creativity and inclination towards standardized service offers ► Dependence on founding EBMO for resources, capacity and mandate
Associated	► An independent organization and legal entity with its own board and management ► Membership in or formal affiliation to an EBMO ► Has own constitution, bylaws and direct membership ► Vision, mission and strategy tend to be aligned with an EBMO	► Free of operational interference by founding EBMO and other organizations ► Specialist status can serve as source of power and influence	► Remoteness from the apex EBMO could reduce capacity to influence the national business agenda or engage in advocacy with the government; ► Self-reliance comes at the risk of insufficient income being generated to sustain or scale up work ► Poor leadership can damage the BCYE’s reputation and thus its ability to attract members or scale up its work
Ad hoc	► Established to pursue a specific objective or task ► Involves a mixed group of stakeholders ► Short- to medium-term lifespan ► No membership, services or secretariat	► Specialist status can serve as source of power and influence ► Fast decision-making and significant room for creativity	► Competing needs and interests among stakeholders ► May lack wider support from the business community and be viewed as an “outsider” ► Remoteness from the apex EBMO could reduce capacity to influence the national business agenda or engage in advocacy with the government ► Self-reliance comes at the risk of insufficient income being generated to sustain or scale up work ► Poor leadership can damage the BCYE’s reputation and thus its ability to attract new members or scale up work

Selecting a name and logo

Selecting a name and logo for the BCYE is essential because it helps grow awareness of the coalition. A logo can give identity to the BCYE, tell a story and resonate with the members and the audience. A well-designed logo has the capability of increasing brand awareness, giving the BCYE more traction. A striking logo can also be a useful marketing tool. The following are a few examples of a BCYE logo.



Developing a strategic plan¹⁰ and budget

Developing strategies and having a budget are necessary to enable a BCYE to advance the interests of youth entrepreneurs at the national or international level. It requires a strategic approach that determines priorities and channels for effective delivery. The ability to plan long-term while maximizing performance and impact in the short term is a must for a BCYE.

A strategic plan that elaborates the strategies and direction of the BCYE helps create a road map to success. The governing board, together with the CEO, in consultations with its members thus should develop a strategic plan and a budget for the BCYE. Ideally, it should take a three-year view and be partnered with a more detailed annual work plan that outlines outputs and activities. Where the BCYE is internal to or associated with an EBMO, alignment of its strategic plan with that of the EBMO is also critical.

A strategic plan should contain: an introduction by the chairperson; an executive summary; background information relating to the evolution of the BCYE and an assessment of the changing external landscape such as the economic conditions, the state of youth entrepreneurship, current government policy on youth entrepreneurship and the private sector ecosystem in the country; the mission and vision statement; the strategic priorities and objectives; how the plan will be put into action; and how it will be reviewed.

It is important to observe the following steps in order when developing a strategic plan:

1. Secure buy-in from the governing board.
2. Establish a planning process.
3. Develop and agree on the vision and mission statement.
4. Agree on strategic priorities.
5. Turn strategic priorities into objectives.
6. Measure and review progress.

Usually, once the strategic plan is completed and approved by the governing board, it should be handed to the secretariat for developing a work plan. The CEO should lead the work plan process. However, for a new BCYE, it would make sense for the board and the CEO to create an annual work plan alongside the agreed strategic plan that covers the action points and activities necessary to achieve the strategic objectives.

The strategic plan must be accompanied by an activity and output-based budget to be an effective and living document that can drive the objectives in building a successful BCYE. The following are some factors to consider when developing a strategic plan for a BCYE:

- economic conditions in the country;
- the awareness of entrepreneurship as a driver for economic growth;
- existing government policy on youth employment, entrepreneurship and private sector development;
- coverage and efficacy of current entrepreneurship initiatives if any;

¹⁰ This section is adapted from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.

- existing EBMO or ecosystem stakeholders supporting youth and entrepreneurship in the country, as well as other national, regional or international organizations or agencies promoting youth and entrepreneurship;
- other potential partners for collaboration;
- training and business support services available for youth entrepreneurs; and
- resources and funding needed to manage and operate the BCYE, such as office rental, staff and administration costs and communication and marketing costs.

Vision, mission and objectives of the Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica

Our vision

To increase the survival and success rate of young and youth-owned businesses in Jamaica. [The Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica] will create an environment where the young entrepreneurs can support and inspire one another in growth, balance and success.

Our mission

To lead the development of thriving young business through the delivery of dynamic, high-value event-driven programming that communicates the fundamental skills of business management. To promote a cadre of young entrepreneurs to mentor each other in business.

Aims and objectives of the Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica

- To identify and organize young entrepreneurs in Jamaica.
- To transform the Jamaican mindset through the promotion of innovation and creativity.
- To affect public policy to improve the Jamaican business environment.
- To facilitate the success of entrepreneurial ideas through the provision of relevant training and education.
- To develop a forum for networking among members and the local and international business community.
- To promote best ethical practices.
- To foster an image of inclusion.

Source: Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica, <http://www.yeajamaica.com/>.

National Commission for Young Entrepreneurs in Mexico

The National Commission for Young Entrepreneurs (COPARMEX) offers to:

- promote entrepreneurship among the youth of Mexico, through experience, inspiration and motivation;
- foster the establishment of new enterprises that share the principles and values of COPARMEX;
- foster a national and international network that generates business and business support for entrepreneurs;
- generate direct links with public or private organizations that add value to business development, and represent members with these institutions;
- implement a uniform communication strategy throughout the country to strengthen the actions of the COPARMEX and its commissions;
- provide useful, relevant and timely information to its members; and
- strengthen and develop new chapters throughout COPARMEX's business centres in the country.

Source: National Commission for Young Entrepreneurs.

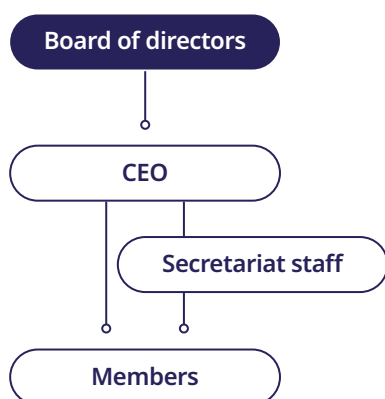
The strategic plan is an important working document and a vital tool with which members can judge the successes of the BCYE. It is also a marketing tool for attracting new members and applying for funding. It is worth investing the time necessary to produce a good strategic plan and consider professional ways of packaging it.

For further insights and guidance, see the ITC-ILO publication [A Strategic Approach to the Management of Employers' Organizations](#).

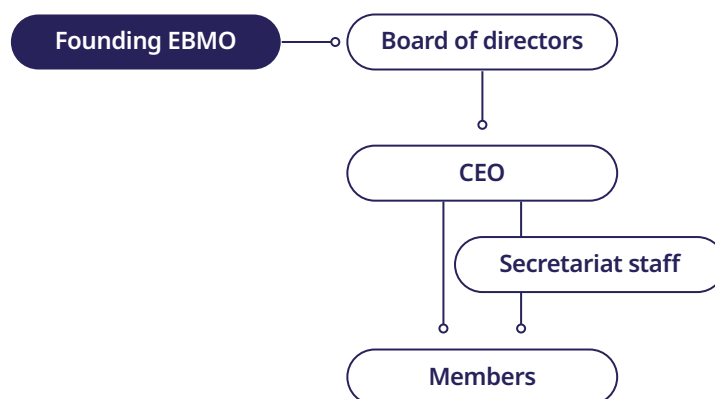
Developing an organizational structure

The structure of the BCYE will depend on the primary objectives, projected size and duration of the coalition and the human resources and capabilities available to support activities. The following are some of the recommended organizational structures according to the type of the BCYE.

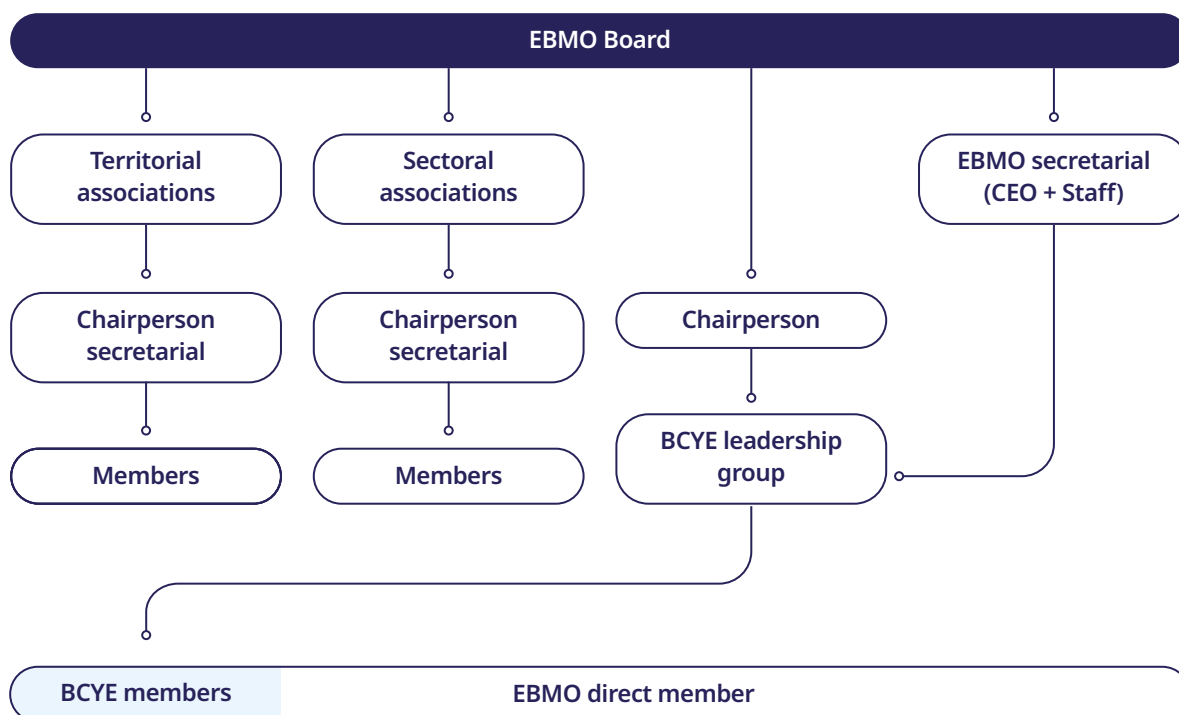
1. Independent BCYE



2. Associate BCYE



3. Internal BCYE



Relations with the government and other stakeholders

As a non-profit entity established by the private sector for the private sector, it is important that a BCYE has a good working relationship with the government and other stakeholders while pursuing its mission and objectives of strengthening youth entrepreneurs in the country.

A BCYE should engage with the government and maintain a relationship. This is especially necessary for discussions on national strategy or policy decisions affecting young people and entrepreneurship, such as a youth employment policy or an entrepreneurship policy, or when pursuing policies to support and nurture youth entrepreneurs, such as subsidies, incentives, grants or training.

It is also important for a BCYE to develop alliances and relationships with other national, regional and international organizations or stakeholders working to support youth and entrepreneurship. These can include the national and international Junior Chamber of Commerce, the ASEAN Business Youth Association and the Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs Asia. These relationships build networks that develop and support credible, united voices on common issues and provide a platform for exchange of information and best practices.





▶ 3

How should a sustainable membership strategy be developed?

A BCYE is a voluntary and membership-based organization that forms to pursue a collective common interest in promoting and supporting youth entrepreneurship. **It needs to develop a strong membership base to be representative and influential, both with policymakers and within the business community.**

Membership base and criteria

A broad and diverse membership base is important to be representative and influential and for achieving the goals of the BCYE. In this context, the composition of membership and its criteria are the main element of its membership strategy. The membership of the BCYE should be voluntary and targeted at a specific group of entrepreneurs – th entrepreneurs. Although it may be tempting for an EBMO to segment and assign youth entrepreneurs within its membership to affiliation with an internal BCYE, this should be avoided. The principle of voluntary association should be upheld and respected. There should also be no prohibition on youth entrepreneurs taking up membership in multiple organizations.

Membership of a BCYE will depend on its rules of establishment and the remit of its agenda. Yet, setting clear criteria for membership is important. In setting that criteria, a BCYE will need to strike a balance between having enough specific criteria to attract quality and credible members and being too selective (so that the criteria do not become an impediment to diverse membership). In the early days of a BCYE, it may make more sense to set general criteria for membership to attract the largest and most diverse membership possible. Then over time, introduce more selective criteria. Example membership criteria for a BCYE just starting out may be as simple as (i) members should be within a designated age range and (ii) members must be the founder, co-founder, owner or co-owner of an enterprise. Depending on context and objectives, a BCYE may also want to consider whether the legal status of each enterprise should be taken into account as part of the membership criteria.

Determining the membership fee

The subscription income from membership fees represents a core income stream for most EBMOs and serves as an appropriate business model for a BCYE seeking sustainability. The level and composition of membership fees are crucial. A fundamental issue is deciding whether the BCYE wants to maximize income from the membership fees or adopt fee levels that allow it to maximize its representativeness through a broad membership base. The recommended strategy would be to balance revenue generation to ensure sustainability with achieving optimal representativeness.

Many EBMOs have found success by offering tiered membership dues, whereby members self-select a membership package that meets their specific needs and interests. Or membership dues are determined against a tiered structure based on certain criteria (such as the size of a member's enterprise). Regardless of the membership fee structure selected, each BCYE will need to be realistic in terms of what youth entrepreneurs are able to afford, given that many will be small enterprises just starting out. The higher the membership fee, the more tempting it becomes for an enterprise to be a "free rider" – that is, not joining the BCYE but benefiting from the BCYE's achievements, such as policy changes.

Membership fees vary between countries and organizations, depending on a country's economic conditions and price levels, the benefits available for members (free or subsidized services), the level of services, the existence of competitors, the existence of donors, the size of the secretariat, etc. In determining the optimal level of fees to charge, a BCYE may refer to the membership fee structure of other EBMOs in the country, especially sector-based or a cluster group of EBMOs, like a women entrepreneurs' association. Because most youth entrepreneurs are micro or small business owners, a BCYE may need to offer some financial incentive to join, such as a reduced or waived membership fee until a member's business has grown.

Attracting members¹¹

In today's competitive landscape, a BCYE needs to offer differentiated benefits and opportunities to attract and retain youth entrepreneurs as members. Having a clear value proposition or statement of benefits from membership and making sure it is accurate, clear and reflects youth entrepreneurs' needs is the starting point for establishing and building a relationship with members.

Before approaching potential members, a BCYE should articulate the various benefits of membership to youth entrepreneurs. A summary of clear and concise membership benefits should be drafted to be used in the recruitment or marketing brochure and on the BCYE website. The success of the recruitment activities depends on the added value that the BCYE can bring and how this value is presented to the potential members. The BCYE's comparative advantage will be the targeting of the specific needs of the youth entrepreneurs, in terms of advocacy, services and networking.

¹¹ This section is adapted from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.

A BCYE should highlight the following in its recruitment campaign:

- Previous success in advocacy campaigns that have delivered benefits to youth entrepreneurs, such as a specific government policy or programmes.
- Technical activities, programmes or collaborative initiatives and other unique services that benefit youth entrepreneurs, such as branding, certification or programmes in cooperation with regulators.
- The services that help youth entrepreneurs to comply with licensing requirements or pre-clearance market procedures for their products (for example, product registration and help with accessing new markets).
- Networks, public relations and extensive contacts with partners and stakeholders, including politicians, government agencies, non-government organizations and related national and international agencies and organizations that could attract new members. Being part of a successful and reputable organization representing well-reputed youth entrepreneurs is an attraction. There are examples that the right for companies to use the BCYE's logo in a business context is considered a competitive advantage.

Membership benefits of the National Entrepreneurs Association (USA)

The young entrepreneur membership of the National Entrepreneurs Association is geared towards individuals aged 18–40, with full member benefits accorded to individuals. The young entrepreneur members organize special meetings and events to address their unique needs. Benefits include:

- attend all virtual events free;
- free and discounted live events;
- free coaching services;
- free and discounted medical benefits;
- access to members-only and young entrepreneur events;
- discount on Dell products and services;
- personal Dell tech representative;
- access to members' area;
- discount on entrepreneur certification;
- subscription to online newsletter;
- eligibility to hold office; and
- member discounts with National Entrepreneurs Association affiliates.

Source: National Entrepreneurship Association, www.nationalentrepreneurs.org/membership.

Attracting new members

To appeal to entrepreneurs, a BCYE should define its value proposition and communicate it clearly and with consistency across channels. This includes the BCYE product offering to members, the price that will be charged and distinguishing any other features, like the quality of services and the strength of representativeness.

With a clear value proposition, the BCYE should then divide its targeted market into segments and then proceed to build awareness and stimulate interest using both modern and traditional channels of communication. The focus should be on the targeted segmented audience and should speak directly to their needs and desires to enhance the attractiveness of BCYE membership.

To ensure a positive experience for new members, there should be a user-friendly and customer-centred registration and payment process and a proactive approach to integrating new members into the organization to enhance the feeling of belonging and ownership of the BCYE.

To align the operational system with best practice, the BCYE management should have processes in place to monitor and review all recruitment activities through the use of appropriate ratio measurements against key performance indicators. Senior management and the governing board should be kept up to date with regular reports on appropriate performance measurements and metrics.

Source: Adapted from the ITC-ILO's [Manual for EBMOs on Membership Strategies and Policies](#).

Recruiting members

Recruiting new members can be a labour-intensive process. Various methods can be used in recruitment measures, depending on the circumstances and limitations in each country. Some standard methods are as follows:

1. Campaign or roadshow

The BCYE can undertake a campaign or roadshow to promote youth entrepreneurship and recruit new members, preferably in collaboration with the EBMO or some related agency or organization or in conjunction with special occasions, such as World Youth Skills Day (15 July), World Entrepreneurs Day (21 August), International Youth Day (12 August) and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day (27 June). The information events also can be organized during trade shows or trade exhibitions, where there are many prospective members. It is crucial for a BCYE to set up an impressive booth that reflects the objectives, activities and energy of the organization and to have trained staff or representatives who speak languages that touch the right chord to approach or present to prospective members about the BCYE and the benefits of membership. It is important to keep in mind that a BCYE is offering a service and not a product. But it is not only offering tangible matters, such as service and information, but also intangible values, such as participation in activities together with like-minded entrepreneurs to achieve common goals of empowering and growing youth entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in the country.

Guinness World Record for the largest practical business seminar – A campaign to raise awareness around entrepreneurship

In October 2017, the Young Entrepreneurs Association of Cambodia joined forces with the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to set an officially certified Guinness World Record for the largest practical business seminar, with 2,304 participants. It far surpassed the previous record of 1,231 participants set in Indonesia in 2016.

The Guinness World Record was part of a campaign organized by the Ministry, with the support of the ILO and the Young Entrepreneurs Association, to raise awareness among youth in Cambodia about entrepreneurship as a pathway to decent work. More than 2,300 youth aged 15–24 from across the country gathered for a one-day seminar, complemented by presentations from accomplished Khmer entrepreneurs.

The successful Guinness world record attempt was followed immediately with a high-level panel discussion among policymakers and private sector representatives on entrepreneurship opportunities and the promotion of sustainable business in Cambodia. With the panel discussion broadcast nationally, Kouch Pheng, President-Elect of the Young Entrepreneurs Association, used the opportunity to articulate the organization's value proposition and call on young entrepreneurs to connect with the coalition.



Source: ILO, "Cambodia Sets New Guinness World Record while Promoting Youth Entrepreneurship" (2017), www.ilo.org/asia/media-centre/news/WCMS_582269/lang-en/index.htm.

2. Visits to potential member companies

Experience shows that larger companies and key prospective members should be approached personally by well-known representatives of a BCYE, maybe in cooperation with board members who have links to that targeted company. Company leaders usually welcome a visit where they are given the opportunity to present their company and to listen to the organization's information about its mission, objectives and activities. The meeting might be concluded by saying that the company is "welcome to contact us whenever you have a problem".

3. Marketing and advertisement

Experience also shows that writing letters or emails are likely to be a waste of time. General advertising, such as in the media, that promotes the value of joining an EBMO does not pay dividends. However, in today's digital world, many EBMOs, especially sector-based or cluster groups, such as a BCYE, are using social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to promote or advertise their activities. It may not have the immediate effect of attracting members, but it can be good advertisement to create awareness of the image and brand, especially among youth entrepreneurs who are using social media platforms to publicize their regular and daily activities. As part of its recruitment campaign, for example, the Young Entrepreneurs Council Vanuatu partnered with Digicel, the leading telecommunication company in the country, to send a text message announcing the formation of the council to its 45,000 clients throughout the country.

Campaigns may yield good results when approaching a certain geographical area containing many prospective members among small companies. Systematic colleague-to-colleague visits may be the best means to gain their trust and interest in joining the BCYE. This is in line with one management guru's advice: "You gain more, and faster, by showing interest in the potential members' business and personalities, instead of trying to get them interested in your organization."¹² If representatives of the BCYE have generated interest in the private sector and presented the organization and the advantages of membership well, prospective members will be more likely to contact the BCYE for information or support.

The best "advertisement" for membership is being well-known for providing exemplary service and added value to member companies. Gradually building up a good brand name and image, which also stands for the most representative and best organization in the sector, is also critical for recruiting.

For more perspectives on membership strategies by EBMOs and practical guidance, see the ITC-ILO's [*Manual for EBMOs on Membership Strategies and Policies*](#).

¹² Taken from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.



4

What are the financial resources and strategies for a sustainable business coalition?

Having stable income¹³ is crucial for the effective and sustainable operation of a successful BCYE. It enables the organization to recruit qualified and competent staff to enable the secretariat to perform its function and deliver value-added services, which in turn will attract new members. Service provision and increased membership generate revenue and incomes for the organization. It is a virtuous circle.

Financial resources can come from different sources. However, **membership subscription fees** and **payments for direct services** are the two common and important sources of income for a cluster EBMO, like a BCYE. The vast majority of BCYEs levy annual membership fees. The question is what should be the proportion between the subscription fees and the payments for direct services. In other words, what should be included in the basic subscription? Youth entrepreneurs who join the BCYE and pay the subscription fee would expect some benefits or services in exchange.

¹³ This section is adapted from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.

There is no standard regarding subscription fees for employers' or business organizations. Within countries, though, benchmarking can be done between EBMOs, including the sector-based or cluster EBMOs. Subscriptions vary considerably between countries and organizations, depending on several factors (covered in Chapter 3).

Payment of membership fees

Because most BCYEes need to rely on the payment of subscription fees from members to support their daily operations, members' financial discipline in terms of paying their fee on time is vital. The BCYE should establish the mechanism by which membership fees are determined and the payment schedule, including the means for periodic changes in the fee structure and any charges for individual members that require special services. The BCYE should also establish rules for late payment and non-payment of dues, clearly outlining the procedure for notifying members who are in arrears, including suspension of services and membership cancellation. The rules should also indicate the status of membership rights for any member in arrears. For example, members in arrears may lose voting rights in the general meeting, the right to services, the right to hold any office in the BCYE governing board or the right to participate in national or international events or activities.

Payment for direct services

As already stated, payment for direct services is a common approach among EBMOs, in addition to a basic subscription fee. The pricing of paid services is delicate and must be carefully considered. Members who have paid the subscription fee likely are willing to pay extra for unique or customized services. The unique competency of the organization would be the basis for selling its services. Market research should be carried out that looks at competitors' products and prices.

Other than membership fees and revenue from providing services, there are other possible sources of income for a BCYE although they are more ad hoc by nature. Thus, they cannot be relied upon as core funding sources, even though they may be significant. Examples include sponsorships, advertising, external grants or income derived from projects.

Sponsorship

Sponsors can help financially by supporting conferences, publications, websites or physical assets, like computers and televisions. The sponsoring organization usually pays a cash sum or offers a product or service in return for prominent exposure at conferences in the BCYE's premises or publications as well as access to the BCYE's mailing list. A BCYE that invites sponsored income or contributions in-kind must ensure that its credibility is not eroded but enhanced by its association with the sponsoring company.

Advertising

Magazines and other publications typically exist on the basis of advertising, including the websites of popular organizations. A BCYE can consider selling advertising space to members and potential members to recoup a part or all of its publications or website's production and distribution costs.

Grants

Grants are another option of getting resources and funding. It is helpful to have seed capital provided by a donor or agency, especially in the setting-up phase and, to a limited extent, beyond. For example, the ILO has provided initial grants through national EBMOs to establish six youth entrepreneurs' councils in Pacific Island countries.¹⁴ Although grants can be useful, it is important to recognize they are time-bound, and the BCYE will need a sustainable business and financing model beyond it.

¹⁴ The ILO has supported the establishment of six youth entrepreneur councils within a national EBMO in Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Kiribati and Tonga in their recruiting of members, developing a strategic plan and a work plan.

Other than general grants that may apply to a newly established BCYE in the initial phase, most are project grants that require the coalition to accomplish or implement specific objectives. The Asia-Pacific Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project 2019, the Asia Pacific Youth Entrepreneurship Program and the Young Entrepreneurs Project in Australia are examples of project grants.

To secure grants, it is necessary to study the market and learn about potential donors, preferences, terms and requirements. Most development agencies or donors have particular areas in which they exclusively concentrate. Thus, a BCYE looking for a grant should look at donor or development agencies that focus on sustainable development, small businesses, entrepreneurship or youth entrepreneurship and then align its strategic priorities and political positioning with that of the potential donors.

There is a significant amount of work involved in finding, applying and securing a grant. Most project grants are conditional upon successful completion of project activities and objectives and often involve complex reporting obligations. A BCYE should only apply for grants with objectives that align with the BCYE's objectives and where they will carry forward the BCYE's agenda. It is easy for a BCYE to get caught up in seeking large grants simply because of the funds involved, but this approach risks steering the organization off course and causing it to lose sight of its priorities.

Government support

In some countries, the government offers social partner organizations preferential fiscal treatment, direct grants or in-kind assistance, such as office space, facilities or equipment. Even though it is common for a BCYE to take advantage of any funding opportunities offered by the government, it must never forget that the primary objective and role of a BCYE is to lobby the government for the interests of its member. In other words, it must be clear to governments and members that the acceptance of government funding will not influence the views or behaviour of the BCYE.

In-kind support

In addition to direct financial assistance or support for specific projects, a BCYE can also benefit from in-kind assistance from external donors. Such in-kind support can be:

- provision of office space free of charge;
- use of secretarial, copying and postal services free of charge;
- provision of goods and services (such as office supplies); and
- provision of meeting rooms and other services related to organizing workshops, seminars and other types of meetings free of charge.

This in-kind assistance must be financially transparent and advantageous for the BCYE. It should also be apparent to both the donor and the members that acceptance of such assistance will not influence the views and actions of the BCYE. Finally, the BCYE must comply with local accounting and taxation rules for accepting such in-kind support.

To learn more about financial strategies, see the ILO publication *Building Employers' Organization Revenue – Developing Adequate and Sustainable Income Streams*.



▶ 5

How should a business coalition advocate, communicate and promote youth entrepreneurship?

The collective representation of members' interests tends to be the main reason for establishing a business coalition. This means representing members in a variety of national and international forums. The cornerstones of representing members' interests are advocacy and collective representation in dialogue with policymakers and stakeholders.

A BCYE representing members must engage in dialogue with policymakers, presenting their main issues, challenges and policy positions. It should advocate policy change to improve the business environment and the available support for youth entrepreneurs. A BCYE also facilitates dialogue between youth entrepreneurs, the wider business community and strategic stakeholders to gather support for its policy positions and widen its network, partnerships and collaborations that promote and support youth entrepreneurship.

It is important for a BCYE to be recognized as an effective advocate. It not only strengthens its public profile with policymakers and within the business community, but the visibility and "brand recognition" directly promote the other revenue-generating services it offers.

Effective advocacy¹⁵

There are several common features for being effective in advocacy. A good example is the list of successful advocacy actions drawn up by the Center for International Private Enterprise. Interest groups (such as BCYEs) that advocate effectively are known to:

- ▶ articulate members' concerns as a unified voice, thus attracting the attention of policymakers;
- ▶ meet regularly with decision-makers to discuss policy issues and to provide well-researched evidence to support positions;
- ▶ establish regular channels of communication and close working relationships with government officials;
- ▶ use these channels to promote members' interests by influencing the pace and direction of specific laws and policy proposals; and
- ▶ monitor the administration of policies and prevent frequent changes to the business-related legal and regulatory framework.

To be effective in advocacy, a BCYE must have clear advocacy priorities, the ability to undertake research and analysis, a good understanding of the processes of government and administration, good communication and a good network of contacts within the government. It is also strategic for the BCYE to have a strong relationship with national and sector-based EBMOs that engage regularly in policy work with the government.

As indicated earlier, entrepreneurs provide the engine for economic growth. But starting and operating a business can be a complex process, and even more so for young people who may have innovative ideas and energy but lack capital, experience, skills, infrastructure, technological know-how, market access or networks.

Government policies have a significant effect on the success or failure of entrepreneurs. Legislation addressing economic issues may hinder or help youth entrepreneurs, particularly regulations related to credit and to starting and operating a business. The BCYE would be in a strong position to advocate for enabling policies and ecosystems for youth entrepreneurs and to make use of technology and networks that enable members' greater access to finance, business information and services. This access can help youth entrepreneurs reach success and improve the sustainability of their businesses.

To serve youth entrepreneurs, the business coalition can begin by mapping the situation of youth entrepreneurs in the country to show the sectors where they are active and the obstacles that they face in growing their business. A BCYE can also consult the EBMOs that operate at local and national levels to find opportunities for joint advocacy efforts. A BCYE may advocate for legal reform or lobby government ministries on policy to facilitate youth entrepreneurs' access to credit, training and skills development, business information and services. It can also lobby banking and finance institutions to provide credit and social insurance facilities to youth entrepreneurs.

For each priority advocacy issue, a BCYE needs to map a campaign plan that tracks an issue through its various stages. It should detail the various interventions the BCYE proposes to make, allocate responsibility for actions and specify who will coordinate the overall activity.

¹⁵ This section is adapted from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.

Young entrepreneurs' coalitions

The Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica called on the new government administration to facilitate greater inclusion of players from the micro, small and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) sector in decision-making bodies and boards across the Government. It was part of a strategy to institutionalize support for MSMEs through a more integrated all-of-government approach. The Association argued that institutionalizing the support to the MSME sector would help stimulate productivity and investment among MSMEs.

The Association's president also proposed that the Government maximize the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of the sector to solve national challenges, such as crime, which continues to plague the country and the sector and thus deplete entrepreneurs' confidence to venture into or remain in business.

Source: Alpha Saunders, "Young Entrepreneurs Call on Gov't for a Seat at the Table", Jamaica B, 25 September 2020, www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/young-entrepreneurs-call-on-gov-t-for-a-seat-at-the-table_203942?profile=1470.

The Young Entrepreneurs Council of EBMOs in several Pacific Islands countries (Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Kiribati, Papua New Guinea and Tuvalu) presented joint recommendations to the ministers at the 2018 Pacific Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, calling for the mainstreaming of youth entrepreneurship in national developmental and sector-based policies, including education policies. The recommendation has received enormous support from the governments of the eight Commonwealth island countries in the Pacific, which have resolved and committed to implementing policies that will enable more young people to become entrepreneurs and job creators rather than jobseekers.

Source: The Commonwealth, "Pacific Islands Commit to Policies that Promote Youth Entrepreneurship", 26 April 2017, <https://thecommonwealth.org/media/news/pacific-islands-commit-policies-promote-youth-entrepreneurship>.

Being part of an international network is also a considerable advantage in going beyond what is available to other organizations or individuals. Organizations such as the international Junior Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Youth Entrepreneurs and the Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs are examples of international networks of youth entrepreneurs. Tapping into the experience of other alliances confronted with the same issues and learning from them should form an integral part of a BCYE's strategic advocacy approach.

For further guidance on lobbying and advocacy, see the publication *Maximizing the Impact of the Voice of Business – Developing and Implementing a Successful Advocacy Strategy* or complete the ITC-ILO's [free one-hour training module for EBMOs](#).

Member communication

Members need to be regularly updated on the BCYE's advocacy objectives, the actions being taken by the BCYE, the actions that would be helpful for them to undertake and how any advocacy effort is progressing. This includes provision of the most up-to-date facts on the issues of the advocacy agenda. Communication with all members is vital if the BCYE is to secure commitment to its objectives and solicit member support and help in advocacy.

Communicating the outcome of any advocacy effort is essential to show the performance and effectiveness of the BCYE. But it is often difficult to explain advocacy success because the outcome may mean that legislation is delayed or is less damaging than might have otherwise been the case. Thus, declaring a "win" could also mean declaring a "loss" for someone else. This may not help the ongoing relationship with policymakers or other interest groups. A straightforward outcome success is safe to highlight, such as a direct subsidy, financial grant or development programmes granted by the government or development agencies for its members.

Members and the public will often judge advocacy success by the relevance of the issues the BCYE is working on and the volume and tone of media coverage. In short, they want to witness clear evidence that the BCYE is working hard on the issues that matter to them.

With this in mind, it is crucial to ensure that the BCYE:

- ▶ undertakes regular member consultation on the lobbying agenda;
- ▶ updates members regularly on the actions taken through newsletters, briefs or updates;
- ▶ keeps advocacy information current on its website; and
- ▶ ensures visibility of any positive media coverage that the BCYE receives in regular publications and on the website.

It should go without saying that when the BCYE has had a major success, it should make the most of it with its members.

Media

Media are vital for promoting or diminishing a BCYE's image and reputation. Journalists can be a best friend, but they can also be an enemy. The approach to the media should be strategic. Reporters with the most important newspapers, journals and broadcast programmes should be aware of what the BCYE does, who the BCYE's members are and the issues that the BCYE works on.

It is rewarding to get a reputation for producing suitable quality materials that are useful to the media. When the media look for assistance, the BCYE should be responsive and provide helpful information. By successfully managing a positive and proactive relationship with the press, the BCYE is more likely to generate "earned" media coverage.

There are some basic but essential tools that a BCYE should develop to build effective cooperation with the press as part of increasing its visibility and targeting specific advocacy issues. The main tools are press releases, issue briefs, fact sheets and press packs, depending on the audiences and the purpose of the message.¹⁶

A **press release** is one of the most effective ways of getting a message through to the general public, coalition members and individuals the BCYE seeks to influence. It has the benefit of not being seen as biased lobbying but as independently reported information or news. However, journalists receive a large number of press releases every day. Thus, to increase the chances of it being used, the content and timing of a press release must consider the journalists who are rushing to meet a deadline. It must be newsworthy (released on the day of an event or to announce an upcoming event) and give the journalists sufficient information and time to follow up.

An **issue brief** is particularly useful for board members and staff to prepare them to engage in lobbying. It is brief but has sufficient substance (background, evidence, data and prepared arguments) for a quick meeting with policymakers.

A **fact sheet** is a quick and easy way to create a summary of an issue and can be used by reporters for background information. In the advocacy context, fact sheets are used to cover an issue in sufficient depth to provide readers with a full understanding of the subject at hand. A fact sheet should be one to two pages in length, well organized, clear and easy to read, and answer typical questions.

¹⁶ For more details, refer to the 2011 ILO-ITC's *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employer's Organization and Guide 3: Advocacy – Maximising the Impact of the Voice of Business Developing and Implementing a Successful Advocacy Strategy*.

A **press pack** is normally prepared to back up one-on-one meetings with important media members, or they are distributed at press conferences associated with a particular and specific high-profile event. It is a substantial bundle of documents dealing with a particular issue or issues.

In addition to promoting its advocacy effort, the BCYE can also use the media to market and promote its profile, for example, having a column in a local newspaper or appearing on television on a regular basis. This would only be possible if the column or space is given on a complimentary basis or is heavily discounted.

PACIFIC / FIJI

Young entrepreneurs adapt to Covid-19 challenges

6:58 am on 22 March 2021

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Young entrepreneurs in Fiji are brainstorming solutions to the challenges they face in running their businesses amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Young Entrepreneurs Council says it has provided a safe space for its members to adapt to the global health crisis.



Young Fijian entrepreneurs take their business on a roadshow in 2019. (Photo: Supplied/YEC)

The council's chair, Watesoni Nata Jr, said unemployment and the fear of not being able to afford their services or their products were some of the issues faced by young business owners.

Nata said everybody was trying to re-strategise and adapt their businesses to take on these challenges.

"If you look at the tourism industry, that was one of the major contributors to the GDP and that was the main driving force of our economy," he said.

"Now everything is reduced to nothing so there's huge unemployment."

Nata said he had to re-strategize his own retail shop The Merch, to address the impact of Covid, one of which included launching an online shop.

During most of last year, he said he was getting onto the M-PAISA platform because it was cashless.

There was that whole fear of transacting and exchanging money and that fear transference of Covid-19, he said. "So, we signed onto the M-PAISA platform."

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Nata said The Merch also had a partnership with companies such as Fiji Chemicals as they used to supply their cleaning chemical products to hotels.

"So, because Covid hit and all the hotels closed down, they had nowhere else to supply their chemicals so now they are into retail," he said.

"This way it helps them with Covid and by retailing their product they can get rid of the stuff that is in their warehouses and we get to increase the range of my products in my shop by adding cleaning chemicals and the likes of it as well."

Nata said a council member had to 'shut down her hair and beauty businesses because she used to do make-up in a lot of weddings' in the tourism industry.

But he said the young entrepreneur had redone and re-strategized her business by selling make-up products now.

There are 30 council members and Nata said he is expecting an increase in membership because there was a lot of interest received through their Facebook platform.



Young Fijian entrepreneurs have seen a rise in micro and small business start-ups amid Covid-19. (Photo: Supplied)

Source: See www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/438860/young-entrepreneurs-adapt-to-covid-19-challenges?fbclid=IwAR1JVYse507NpQ-aQsdRGewD_NWIEIE8fGUL2sNif3VRM3OdF2rh_d0IQ.

14 BUSINESS

FIJI SUN | THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2021 | FIJISUN.COM.FJ

Graduation, a Joyful end to Chetty's Daily Juggle Between Work and Studies

Shivneel Sheshmani Chetty could not contain his excitement as he received his Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) certificate from Fiji National University's (FNU) Tamavua Campus last night. He is the Team Leader Properties and company Secretary at FHL Properties Pte Limited, which is a Subsidiary of Fijian Holdings Limited.

The 27-year-old jubilantly said while showing-off his certificate "this paper here is worth all the hassle I've gone through in the last three years."

Managing full-time work and studies is never easy but Chetty took on the challenge and worked persistently towards achieving his goal.

"Sometimes my day would finish around 10 pm after attending my classes, completing assignments and revisions for

exams because I had evening

classes.

"It was a

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FIJI SUN YEC
HOT
Topics
Coverage

in Business Administration (EMBA) programmes offered at the Postgraduate of Business, Hospitality and Tourism. Interested students can visit our website for more. Enrolment for Semester 1, 2021 is now open.

"The EMBA programme, on the other hand, goes beyond that. We get the opportunity to become friends with people who have similar career aspirations. We are then able to share our industry experiences and also get advice from experienced colleagues in the field," he added.

Source: Fiji National University

Feedback: maraia.vula@fijisun.com.fj



Shivneel Sheshmani Chetty received his Executive Masters in Business Administration (EMBA) certificate from Fiji National University's (FNU) Tamavua Campus last week.

InterContinental Fiji Preparing for February Celebrations

Preparations are underway at the multi-award winning InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort and Spa to celebrate both the Chinese New Year as well as Valentine's day that fall days apart.

Chinese New Year will be celebrated on Friday February 12, 2021 and Valentine's day will be celebrated on Sunday February 14, 2021.

Lachlan Walker, Area General Manager South Pacific said, "With Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day falling days apart, we've made certain changes to the experiences that we will be offering at the Resort to ensure that guests will be able to celebrate across the entire weekend."

A revised menu from Navo Restaurant will also be rolled out at the beginning of February. Guests will also

be able to order off of a Chinese inspired menu across the Chinese New Year weekend as we celebrate the Year of the Ox.

In recognition of Valentine's Day, the Resort will be offering a breakfast inclusive rate with supplements available for a romantic two person Cleopatra Bathing Ritual for the night of Thursday 13 and a bottle of Jansz Premium Rose with breakfast on the morning of February 14.

On offer will also be an especially curated 4 course menu prepared by Executive Chef David Bell.

Walker went on to say "Dining at the Resort has been an important component of the experience on offer for both our international and domestic market."

"We've made sure that there will be no exceptions for this

plans in play for the specific weekend beginning Friday February 12.

As we continue our promotions with our Love Locals campaign, we look forward to welcoming more of our local market to the resort to be part of our celebrations."

Local rates start at \$250.00 tax inc per night for two adults and two children and include breakfast, complimentary WiFi, early check in and late check out (subject to availability) and 10% on non-motorized water sports per person per day (Saturday and Sunday only).

For bookings or special requests, guests can call the Reservations team on 6733455 or email on reservations@intercontinental.com.fj

InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort and Spa

Feedback: maraia.vula@fijisun.com.fj

ABOUT THE INTERCONTINENTAL FIJI RESORT AND SPA:

■ The only luxury resort on beautiful Natadola Bay. InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa is designed to treat guests to an exclusive outer island experience on the main land.

■ Spread across 35 acres of tropical manicured landscapes, the resort offers the facilities and services expected of a luxury international resort, including a luxury spa, three pools, a dive pool, an on-site dive centre, three restaurants and two bars, recreation and beach activities centre, volleyball, gym and fitness centre and 18-hole championship golf course.

For more information please also visit www.fiji.intercontinental.com or contact the resort on 673 3455 / Hudson.mitchell@ihg.com



Cleopatra Bathing Ritual at InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort



Participants of the Young Entrepreneurs Council Seminar at the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation (FCEF) Boardroom on January 20, 2020. Picture: Shreya Kumar.

Grants for SMEs now available

SHREYAKUMAR
SIVA

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Fiji and other participating regional countries have been urged to apply for the Business Adaptation Grant managed by Business Link Pacific (BLP).

Speaking at the Young Entrepreneurs Council seminar yesterday,

Business Services Manager HLP Ramesh Chand said grants of up to NZ\$15,000 (FJ\$2,184.40) were available for eligible SMEs in the participating countries.

What to expect

"Grants of up to NZ\$3000 (FJ\$720.40) will be available for businesses with sole proprietorship and for businesses with up to five

employees," he said. "Up to NZ\$10,000 (FJ\$1,440.99) will be available for business with up to 20 employees while NZ\$15,000 (FJ\$2,184.40) will be available for businesses with up to 50 employees. "These Adaptation Grants will assist SMEs to overcome the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and help them to introduce changes and adaptive strategies that will help the business to group in the future." He announced the HLP would avail subsidized Business Advisory Sup-

port to support applications and develop adaptation plans.

"Eligible project activities will contribute to the business adaptation plans. Adaptation plans will help businesses to change, access new markets or adjust to a new environment, including the impacts of COVID-19."

Mr Chand added the Business Link Pacific was a private sector development programme funded by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and Trade and delivered by DT-Global, an international development company.

The other participating countries for the grant are Cook Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Meanwhile, Youth Entrepreneurs Council will continue having monthly seminars, targeted at local SMEs under Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation banner.

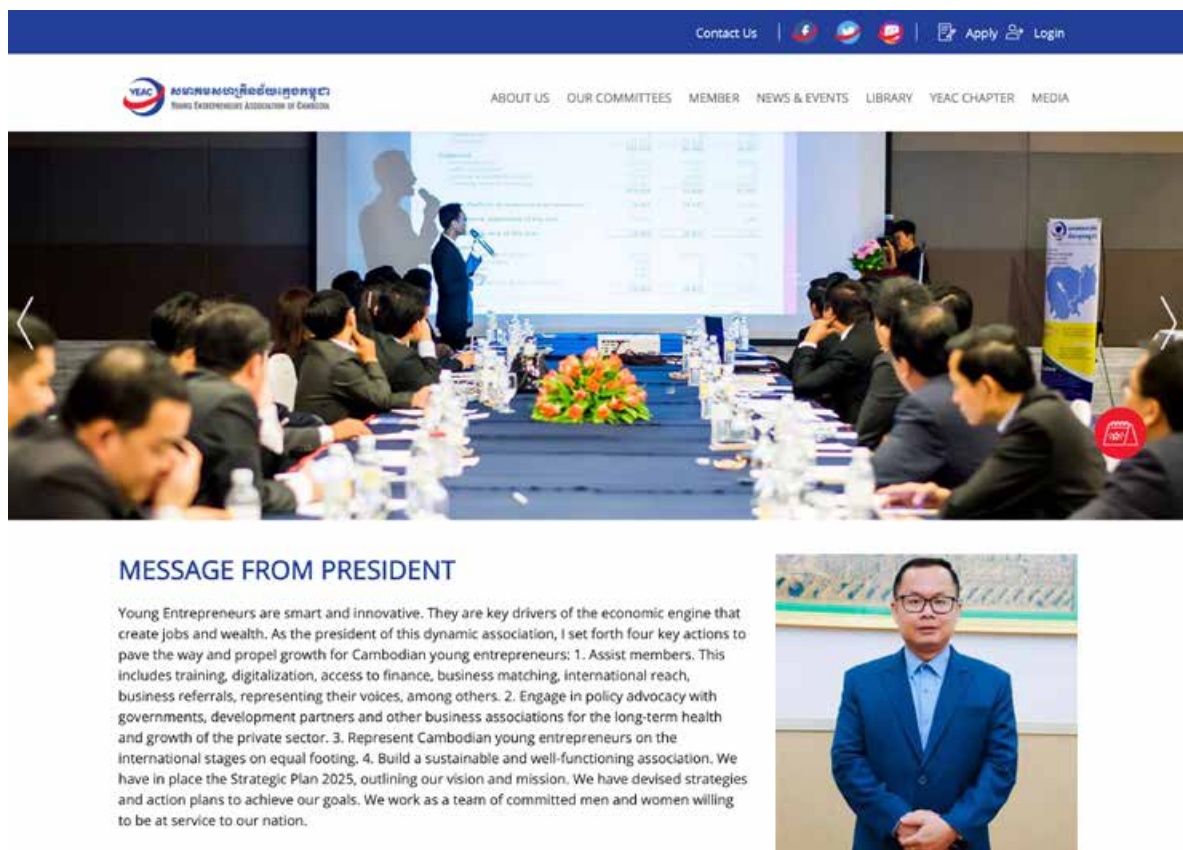
Feedback: shreya.kumar@fijisun.com.fj

Promoting and marketing

Promoting and marketing the BCYE to increase its visibility can help publicize the coalition and its activities, including membership and services offered. BCYEs should provide their members, supporters and the wider business community basic information on the entrepreneurship landscape and the role of the BCYE in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the country. This can be done through several channels and platforms, some of which were introduced previously (in the sections on membership strategy, resources and funding, for example). Digital platforms and digital marketing are likely the more dominant platform for BCYE promotion and marketing activities.

Website

The internet has revolutionized how we do business today. Telemarketing, print ads and billboards dominated the advertising industry for decades. But now, it is all about reaching your target market online. Today, if organizations do not have a website, profiles across social media platforms and a robust online presence, they are significantly losing out. Developing an informative and user-friendly website must be a priority for a BCYE.



In developing the website, the BCYE must ensure that it can attract the attention of members and potential members by being informative and user-friendly.

Generally, a good website for a BCYE should include:

- a profile of the BCYE, including its mission, vision and objectives;
- the organizational structural, governing board, committee and secretariat;
- supporters, partners and alliances;
- member benefits, including programmes, services, networks and sponsorship;
- services offered, including training, workshops and business-related information for members, including new legislation or regulations related to youth and entrepreneurship;

- main activities, including advocacy highlighting actions taken and outcomes;
- member profiles and the sharing of best practices and success stories of members;
- a portal exclusive for members to access critical information;
- media highlights, including press releases and a photography library; and
- current news and events, such as conferences, business awards and youth entrepreneur awards.

It is important to regularly update the website to ensure it has relevant and current information. Some resources would need to be allocated for this purpose, including designing an impressive and user-friendly website and designating someone responsible for inserting, editing and updating the content.

For further guidance on methods and tools to engage with members using digital tools, see the ITC-ILO publication *Mobile Engagement with Members: A Toolkit for EBMOs*.

Digital marketing

In today's digital world, the use of digital technology and social media as a means of communication and marketing are widespread. Digital marketing encompasses all forms of marketing activities done over digital channels, which includes computers, mobile telephones and other electronic devices.

Youth entrepreneurs mostly are using digital platforms and social media in their daily communication and social activities. The popularity of a specific platform or social media channel may vary from country to country. With the knowledge and understanding of the audiences and the popular digital platform and social media used by them, a BCYE should connect its digital marketing campaign to suitable platforms, such as Facebook or Instagram, and tweak its approach and strategy in accordance with the objectives of its activities.

Newsletter

Even though a newsletter could be old-fashioned, it is still an effective tool for connecting with members and disseminating updated information regarding the BCYE. Given the growth and trends in digital communication, the newsletter can be impressively designed as an e-newsletter and sent regularly by email to members, supporters and stakeholders on a quarterly or bimonthly basis. It should feature the activities of the BCYE, highlighting its success stories and services. For example, it can feature how it helps to develop member entrepreneurs, with testimonies from selected individuals. The information should be presented in such a way that it is of interest to the target audience. The e-newsletter also should be available on the BCYE's website.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/YEACambodia>



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/YECSolomonIslands>



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/Young-Entrepreneurs-Council-YEC-162302117526217>



▶ 6

What services should a business coalition offer?

Services to support youth entrepreneurs

Youth entrepreneurs often need information on national policies and programmes, such as access to credit and assistance in starting or expanding their business. A BCYE is well placed to provide them with information, training, education, networking, business development, business promotion, confidence-building programmes and access to potential customers, markets and funding opportunities. Training and education opportunities through workshops, conferences, mentorships and internships can equip youth entrepreneurs with knowledge and skills they might need to succeed in business. A BCYE also has a crucial role in identifying business constraints, finding ways to eliminate obstacles to starting and operating a business, such as access to finance, promoting policy proposals that are good for youth entrepreneurs and to source public funding.

Potential services

The following chart gives examples of the different services that a BCYE can provide, depending on its strength and comparative advantage.

Type of service	Examples
Information provision Scope: labour law, company law, taxation, environment, business legislation, access to finance and markets and certification	▶ Newsletters ▶ Publications: informative reports, booklets, guides, analytical studies and annual report ▶ Comments on new legislation ▶ Dissemination and promotion of good practices and techniques ▶ Regular updates for members on legal and other initiatives and changes, including opportunity for training and funding support
Business advice and consultancy Scope: human resources Legal: laws and compliance, including labour law, company law, taxation law, risk assessment, product safety, digital entrepreneurship, business loans and requirements and green entrepreneurship	▶ Written, oral and website-based ▶ Legal advice: registration, licensing, patent, contract drafting and dispute settlement ▶ Support on compliance ▶ Assistance for loan application ▶ Business case for corporate social responsibility or responsible business practices
Access to public financing Scope: development funds, United Nations funds, research funds; World Bank funds and state funds	▶ Information about tenders, donors and public funds ▶ Project proposal assistance ▶ Consortium formation and project management
Networking Scope: create business contacts, development of social dialogue and advocacy	▶ Regular business meetings ▶ Meetings with policymakers (working lunches, breakfasts) ▶ Member directories and databases ▶ Conferences and high-level meetings ▶ Social and cultural events for members' networking
Trade promotion and market development Scope: market research and marketing	▶ Conducting economic and market surveys ▶ Organizing youth entrepreneur week, youth trade fair or exhibitions ▶ Opportunity to be part of trade delegation to attend trade fair or exhibition abroad ▶ Digital marketing campaigns
Training and development Scope: Laws and compliance (labour law, company law, tax, environment, business legislation, certification), corporate social responsibility, business development (soft and technical skills) and digital entrepreneurship	▶ Labour law and compliance ▶ Rights and obligations of employers ▶ Responsible business practices ▶ How to start and manage your business ▶ Digital marketing and e-commerce

Type of service	Examples
Business mentorship Scope: Business management, presentation, business potential and growth	► Business mentorship programme
Awards and recognition	► Youth Entrepreneur of the Year award ► Excellence brand award
Discount and privileged services Scope: subsidiary services, for example, communications (IT, telephone), automobile leasing, transportation and travelling, legal, insurance and bank services	► Benefits and discounts to members ► Group membership discounts and special rates, loyalty programmes (insurance, publications, fleet purchase)
Infrastructure services Scope: subsidiary services	► Access to BCYE facilities: office facilities, conference services, use of board and meeting rooms, computers and so on

Although there will be wide ranging demand for services from a BCYE, it is not practical for the coalition to offer everything. A BCYE must be selective regarding the services it offers, focusing on areas where it has a comparative advantage and established strength or where it can collaborate with a reliable service provider or partner.

Building on strengths and comparative advantage

The services to be offered by a BCYE must build on its comparative advantages and established strengths and is compatible with the BCYE's mission, objectives and strategic priorities. It cannot be a random response to members' opinions on what services they want to receive. Only after the BCYE has proved itself an excellent service provider in one area should it move on to develop its offerings in other areas.

It is essential for a BCYE to identify its strengths. This may be its privileged advocacy position with legislators, which gives it influence and makes it privy to information and the ability to develop high levels of expertise in the areas related to youth and entrepreneurship. Or it may derive from its relationships and networks with the wider business community, government or other strategic stakeholders at the national and international levels that give rise to the opportunity for exposure, market access, support and assistance.

Offering services

A BCYE should offer services as part of its membership benefits through increased membership fees set at adequate levels or through financial income generated by services provided at a cost. In either or both of these contexts, additional services will be regarded positively by members.

Once the organizational strengths and comparative advantages in the marketplace have been identified, it can be useful to map what services exist, identify gaps to prevent duplication and find ways to complement and reinforce what other business associations or entities are already doing.

After deciding to pursue a new service, it is recommended that a BCYE conduct an assessment of the proposed service, which should include demand and supply analysis, such as who else is providing the service in the market, how much should the BCYE charge for the service, what is its capacity to provide the new service and the staff competencies needed. It should also include service delivery alternatives, such as external expertise on a fee-paying (external contract) or profit-sharing (joint venture) basis, possible collaboration with a national EBMO or other business associates to provide the services, as well as impediments from legal, accounting and taxation requirements.

Young Entrepreneurs Council
HOT TOPICS

SESSION 1
Date: Mon 09 Nov 2020
Venue: FCEF Boardroom Employers Hub, Gorrie Street, Suva.
Time: 10am-1pm

Shailendra Prasad
 Head of E-Commerce
 Vodafone

Online Marketplace Platform
 10AM-11AM

Kelvin Yee
 Head of Health Insurance
 BSP Life

The Importance of Life and Health Insurance.
 11AM-12PM

Eremasi Tamanisau
 Chairman
 Fiji Performance Rights Association

Functions & Responsibilities as a CMO
 12PM-1PM

YEC Fiji

As the above indicates, the Young Entrepreneurs Council in Fiji organizes a monthly networking event around an issue of current relevance.

To learn more about developing, agreeing and delivering a sustainable service strategy, see the ILO publication *Services by Employers' Organizations: A Strategic Approach to Service Development* or complete the ITC-ILO's free one-hour training module for EBMOs on services development.



How should a business coalition encourage women's participation?

The business case for supporting women entrepreneurs

A diverse and inclusive approach is needed when forming any coalition, including a business coalition for youth entrepreneurship. With women now making up 40 per cent of new entrepreneurs,¹⁷ it makes strategic and practical sense for a BCYE to develop strategies to include, advocate and promote women's entrepreneurship.

Evidence-based research has shown that women's economic empowerment and a greater overall gender balance in the workforce improves economic growth, financial performance and organizational effectiveness. Including and promoting women entrepreneurs can also enhance the image, membership base and influence of a BCYE.

¹⁷ Caroline Castrillon, "Why More Women Are Turning to Entrepreneurship", *Forbes*, 9 February 2019, www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2019/02/04/why-more-women-are-turning-to-entrepreneurship/?sh=15e281e0542a.

Most women entrepreneurs work in micro and small businesses, and in many countries, women-owned businesses operate predominately in the informal economy. Women entrepreneurs not only face the traditional challenges associated with being small entrepreneurs, but their business development is limited by gender discrimination and prejudice. This is often mirrored in legislation, policies and programmes. Legislation addressing economic issues can potentially hinder women in business, if it does not set out to help them, particularly regulations around access to credit and ownership of property.¹⁸



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/webcfiji>

The above is an example of a coalition under an EBMO specifically for women entrepreneurs: the Women Entrepreneurs and Business Council within the Fiji Commerce and Employers Federation.

Attracting and encouraging women-owned businesses to membership

A BCYE can attract women business owners to be members by highlighting its services and benefits, including information that will help them in their business, training activities and other related services (as discussed in Chapter 6). It is crucial that a tailored offering is presented because some women business owners may be unaware of membership benefits. A BCYE should reach out to businesses run by women entrepreneurs with targeted campaigns on how membership would be added value to them.

The BCYE should also highlight its advocacy efforts to improve the business environment to make it easy for entrepreneurs to start and operate a business, including women and youth. And it should publicize how it lobbies for legislation reforms or policies that support gender equality, such as property ownership and facilitating women's access to finance. A BCYE should lobby banking and finance institutions to provide credit and social insurance facilities to women and youth entrepreneurs. Undertaking such advocacy enhances the visibility and role of the BCYE in a country.

Because most women entrepreneurs are in micro or small businesses, they may need a financial incentive to join a BCYE, such as reduced or waived membership fees until their business has grown. As indicated in the

¹⁸ ILO, *Promoting Women in Business and Management: A Handbook for National Employers Organization* (2017).

membership strategy discussion (Chapter 3), membership criteria would need to take into consideration the needs and circumstances of micro and small businesses.

Networking and affiliation

Many women's business associations have become members of a national EBMO and are affiliated with different national and international organizations. A BCYE could reach out to the women's associations. Although they may have other priorities and positions, they usually have common goals and objectives for improving the business climate for entrepreneurs. Individually, each one may only have limited influence on common policy issues. A collective and united voice would strengthen their influence and advocacy outcome in improving the business environment and support for youth entrepreneurs, including women.

In addition, a BCYE could promote and empower women entrepreneurs in its governing board and committees. For example, the majority of governing board members of the Young Entrepreneurs' Association of Jamaica are women entrepreneurs.

To learn more about engaging women entrepreneurs, see the ILO publication *Promoting Women in Business and Management: A Handbook for National Employers' Organizations*.

Advocacy for a business environment conducive to women's entrepreneurship

The ILO Women's Entrepreneurship Development assessment centres on five framework conditions and 17 sub-conditions that are important to creating a favourable environment for women's entrepreneurship development.

1. A gender-sensitive legal and regulatory system that advances women's economic empowerment
 - a. labour laws and regulations;
 - b. business registration and licensing; and
 - c. property and inheritance rights
 - i. effective policy leadership and coordination for the promotion of women's entrepreneurship development as a national policy priority;
 - ii. government focal point for the promotion and coordination of women's entrepreneurship development.
2. Access to gender-sensitive financial services
 - a. participation of women entrepreneurs in generic financing programmes; and
 - b. targeted financing programmes for women entrepreneurs.
3. Access to gender-sensitive business development support services
 - a. women's access to mainstream business development support services;
 - b. mainstream business development support services that respond to the needs of women entrepreneurs; and
 - c. targeted business development support services for women entrepreneurs.
4. Access to markets and technology
 - a. export promotion for women entrepreneurs;
 - b. government procurement targeting women entrepreneurs;
 - c. inclusive supply chains and linkages; and
 - d. access to information and communication technology.
5. Representation of women entrepreneurs and their participation in dialogues
 - a. women's representation in business and sector-based associations;
 - b. presence of women entrepreneurs' associations and networks; and
 - c. participation in public dialogue.

Source: See www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_745278.pdf.



▶ 8

How should the performance of a business coalition be monitored and evaluated?

Measuring a coalition's performance

Measuring performance is a vital part of monitoring an organization's progress. It involves measuring the actual performance outcomes or results of an organization against its intended goals. When conducting a performance measure, it is important to clearly understand "why" the organization exists.

The strategic plan and work plan of a BCYE would be a great reference when conducting a performance measure. As indicated in Chapter 2, the strategic plan sets the vision, mission and objectives of a BCYE and details the strategies it will adopt to achieve its objectives. The work plan describes the action points and activities necessary to accomplish the desired outcome with a set time frame, budget and responsible person for each action. The action points are often referred to as key performance indicators.

Establishing the process for regular reviews¹⁹

For an effective performance measure, it is important when developing the strategic plan and the work plan of a BCYE to ensure that a regular process is in place to measure performance, against which the strategic plan can be periodically reviewed. The work plan should be assimilated into the performance management and appraisal systems, and the governing board should review the strategic priorities and objectives on an annual basis. The review may result in amendments to the strategic plan (if necessary) when circumstances change.

Regular review of the work plan

To monitor and evaluate the performance and effectiveness of a BCYE, it is important to have a regular review of the annual work plan. The review is likely to include monthly or quarterly reviews between the CEO and the staff responsible for any specific action and an annual performance evaluation meeting. In such a way, everyone responsible for the identified actions in the workplace will be monitored regularly on their progress towards meeting the objectives.

Review of the strategic plan

A BCYE should review its strategic plan in an annual meeting with the management team in the secretariat. This meeting should not be a simple agenda item added to a regular meeting but should be dedicated exclusively to the progress review of the strategic plan and take between half a day and one day.

The annual review should cover:

- progress against each of the strategic objectives, which is useful for the individual responsible for making formal presentations;
- a review of the content and priority rating of the strategic priorities and objectives; and
- the addition or deletion of strategic priorities and objectives.

A summary of this annual review, including progress and achievements, issues and challenges, and recommendations for the addition or deletion of the strategic priorities and objectives, should be presented by the CEO to the governing board for discussion and approval. Based on this meeting, the annual report to members should include a section dealing with how the BCYE has performed against its strategic priorities and objectives.

Checklist for measuring performance

- Does the BCYE have a strategic plan approved by the governing board?
- Does the BCYE have an annual work plan that describes the action points and activities, with time frame, budget and responsible person for each action?
- Does the BCYE have an effective performance management system that regularly reviews individual and organization achievements against its objectives?
- Does the BCYE have a regular review process for the annual work plan?
- Has the BCYE put in place a process to review the strategic plan on an annual basis?
- Does the board formally discuss the report on the strategic plan review?

¹⁹ The following sections are adapted from the 2011 *Building a Strong and Efficient Sectoral Employers' Organization* guide within the ILO-ITC's *The Effective Employers' Organization* training package.

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