Ibrahima DIAGNE, CEO of Enterprise Diagne & Frères - Senegal

Ibrahima learned the metal carpentry trade from his uncle, whom he worked with for 5 years before he decided to take the plunge into entrepreneurship. After starting his own business, he quickly encountered many challenges: he had difficulties to pay the bills, and to differentiate between his money and the money dedicated to his company. The supply chain was ineffective and expensive and the workshop was not appropriate for the reception of customers. Knowing he was in need for management training and determined not to let his business drown, he participated in an Improve Your Business training in 2008.

After his training, he was able to improve the design and the structure of his workshop and upgrade the quality of his services. He also succeeded in diversifying his basic carpentry activity to agricultural machineries and production of aluminium manufacturing. His revenue has multiplied 50-fold, which ultimately enabled him to access public and private markets and to hire 4 employees. His business now contributes to the training of young people in the area with currently more than 10 young people completing an apprenticeship at his workshop.

After several years of coaching, Ibrahima today formalized his company, and has now become an elected member of the Chamber of Commerce of Kaolack. He has his own house now and lives comfortably from the income generated by the business while also contributing to the economic and social development of his community. Today Ibrahima is helping other artisans to register with the Chamber of Commerce, reporting an increase of more than 100 memberships so far. He is now considered a role model for the young in his community. Ibrahima believes that the IYB module of SIYB was crucial in helping him to develop his management skills and that it set him on the path to become the man he is today.

"Before my training, my business was drowning, today I am even a member of the Chamber of Commerce and pushed more than 100 artisans to formalize."