

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF NAMIBIA

YOUTH ENTERPRISE PROMOTION POLICY

THE POLICY OF NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL (NAMIBIA)

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NATIONAL YOUTH PROMOTION POLICY

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PURPOSE OF POLICY

The purpose of the National Youth Council's Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy is to highlight the contribution young women and men are making, and can make in the future to the development of local communities and the nation as a whole. In addition, the policy endeavors to support the activities of the National Youth Council and other key players in the promotion of youth enterprise.

Through this policy, the activities of the National Youth Council in regards to youth enterprise promotion shall be properly focused and effectively coordinated. Whilst the roles to be played by other stakeholders in the promotion of youth enterprise will also be clarified.

POLICY RATIONALE

The National Youth Council of Namibia is an autonomous umbrella body funded by the Government of Namibia and made up of Namibian youth organizations affiliated to the Council. Amongst its broad aims and objectives the National Youth Council have adopted the following objectives that affect youth enterprise:

“To develop the inherent abilities and capabilities of the individual youth”

“To initiate youth development projects and to encourage the establishment of projects”

The employment desk of NYC has been established with a purpose of raising the level of socio – economic awareness of young men and women, especially unemployed young women and men, thereby enabling their participation in national development. This policy has grown out of the work of the Employment Desk and reflects the Council's recognition of the need and importance of promoting youth enterprise in Namibia.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia has also come to recognize the importance of Youth Enterprise. The First National Development Plan (NDP 1) of Namibia states the following:

Paragraph 5.43, excerpt:

“Many of the unemployed school leavers and those who will join their ranks may end up hopelessly disgruntled if the strategy[for job creation] is restricted to the creation of wage employment...These young people...belong to the now human capita new generation of human labour with the ability and eagerness to learn and try new ideas.”

Paragraph 5.44, excerpt:

“Skills development programmes will combine educational material aimed at changing the attitudes of young people so that they appreciate the benefits of self-employment activities.”

The National Youth Council of Namibia recognizes the important role young women and men can play in the development of Namibia. Particularly through participation in civil society, the growth of the national economy, as well as local and regional economies, care for the environment, the maintenance and development of culture and cultural diversity, and in the building of supportive, caring and nourishing families, communities and relationships. Each of this field s provides a rationale for the promotion of youth enterprise.

Youth enterprise is exhibited when a young man or woman shows initiative and plays an active, independent role in shaping their own future whether working alone or together with others.

REASONS FOR PROMOTING YOUTH ENTERPRISE

These are many good reasons to promote enterprise amongst young people. Youth enterprise:

- Helps young men and women develop new skills and experiences that can be applied to many other challenges in life:
- Creates employment-not only for the young person who owns the enterprise but also for those the business may employ:
- Provides valuable products and services for the country-with most of Namibia's goods and services coming from South Africa, there is a great need for Namibian enterprises to replace these imports:
- Promotes innovating and development – it encourages young women and men to find new solutions, ideas and ways of doing things:
- Helps promote social change and cultural identity:
- Creates a sense of community-one where young women and men are valued and better connected to society: and
- Gives young people a sense of meaning and belonging-it can shape a person's identity and encourage others to treat them as adults.

However, youth enterprise is not the solution for everything. There are certain situations and conditions where youth enterprise should not be promoted. Especially when it:

- Is only concerned with “keeping young people busy”;
- Sets young women and men up for failure by not providing sufficient support;
- Does not have some of the training or advisory mechanism in place to assist young men and women overcome the gaps in their skills and experiences;
- Encourages young women and men to take high risks (e.g. by taking big loans), instead of looking at alternative ways of starting a business with a more manageable risk;
- Is presented as a solution to all the problems of the economy (e.g. “small business alone will save the economy”) or of young people (e.g. “young people must address their problems themselves by starting their own business”);
- Encourages unrealistic ideas of quick wealth; and
- Encourages young women and men to start business when there is no market or too many competitors.

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The National Youth Council encourages the promotion of youth enterprise where it directly addresses the needs and aspirations of young people, whilst recognizing the context and capabilities in which self-employment takes place. Youth enterprise should not be seen as a panacea to the problems of young people in Namibia.

Over the past two years the NYC has undertaken a number of activities toward the promotion and support of youth enterprise initiatives. These include:

1. The Community Projects Development fund – a grant funding programme that provides financial support to a range of community-based youth enterprise and income generating initiatives;
2. Production of a Youth Enterprise Manual with practical advice, ideas and strategies for youth enterprise development will allow youth and business development agencies to deliver well designed and appropriate services.
3. Production of a Youth Enterprise Media Kit containing photographs and simple case studies on ten young business people in Namibia. This media kit was distributed to all media outlets (newspapers, television and radio).
4. Organization of the annual Namibian Youth Enterprise Expo, in 1997 and 1998, for all young people and youth and business development agencies. The Expo provides an opportunity for young women and men in business to display their product learn more about business development opportunities, and to network.
5. Facilitation of the creation of the Junior Chamber Namibia (JCN) providing a mechanism for youth networking and participation with in a formally recognized setting. The JCN also provides young people in business with a mechanism to participate in national policy and programme issues related to enterprise development, whilst providing a support network for each other.
6. Associate Membership of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on SME development and membership of the Coordinating Committee on the Implementation of the Small Enterprise Development Policy in the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

The Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy endeavors to strengthen and build upon its previous initiatives. To give youth enterprise in Namibia a higher profile and greater recognition in terms of the benefits it can offer to young people, their communities and the nation as a whole.

DEFINING YOUTH ENTERPRISE

The National Youth Council policy for Namibia defines a young person as someone aged from 15 to 30 years. It is important to remember, however, that age is just one simple way of defining a young person, there may be many people outside this age range, say, who are 31 or 32 years old who can share many of the same problems or advantages as those aged 15 to 30 years.

The word “enterprise” can have two applications and is most often used to describe a business of a particular size, in Namibia, the Ministry of Trade and Industry has produced a White Paper, endorsed buy Cabinet in 1997, on the development of Small Business Enterprises. A small business is defined in this policy by the number of the business and the capital employed, as shown in the table below:

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The Ministry of Trade and Industry (1997) have indicated that small business employ some 160 000 people in Namibia, *Namibia; Policy and Programmes on Small Business Enterprise*.

Government's definition of a "small business"

Sector	Employment	Turnover (N\$.000)	Capital employed (N\$.000)
Manufacturing	less than ten persons	1.000	500
Other	less than five persons	250	100

Note: To qualify as a "small business" the employment criteria must be met as well as one of the other two criteria. Source: Ministry of Trade and Industry (1997) *Namibia: Policy and Programs on Small Business Enterprises*.

A small business, therefore, includes a one-person business, where the business owner and manager are self-employed, or where the owner/manager employs a few others.

The word "enterprise" has a more valuable role when seen as a process, a collection of actions associated with developing or managing a business. Thus, "Youth enterprise" refers to the actions taken by young men and women to achieve their goals or advance their position.

The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines an "enterprise" is an:

"undertaking especially a bold or different one: courage, readiness to engage in."

The Commonwealth Youth Programme describes enterprise as:

"showing initiative and playing an active, independent role in shaping one's own future, whether working alone or together with others."

The word enterprise then, relates to a certain approach and attitude that an enterprising persons exhibits, in business terms, it is possible to talk about someone who has an "enterprising approach to business". More often, however, the word "entrepreneur" is used to describe this situation. An "entrepreneur" has been defined by the *Concise Oxford Dictionary* as a

"person in effective control of a commercial undertaking: contractor acting as an intermediary".

Entrepreneurship is about creating and building something of value from practically nothing. It is the process of creating or seizing an opportunity and pursuing it regardless of the resources of the creation and distribution of value and benefits to individuals, groups, organizations, and society. Entrepreneurship is not a get-rich-quick initiative. It is one of building long-term and durable cash flow streams. Thus, the term "youth enterprise" when used in this policy shall refer to business that are owned and managed by women and men aged from 15 to 30 years old. Particular emphasis is place on the processes of business development and management and the use of enterprising attitudes, behaviors and skills. Youth enterprise promotes entrepreneurship and the growth of innovative and profitable businesses, it includes self-employed and businesses where young people employ others-some of whom may be older than the young owner/manager.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

There are a number of factors associated with the social and economic environment for youth enterprise in Namibia. The following issues have particular relevance:

YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN IN NAMIBIA

Namibia is a very youth-full country. Seventy two per cent of Namibia's population is below the age of 30, whilst 46 per cent of the population are from 15 to 30 years of age. With such a significant youth population young women and men can play a important role in the development of Namibia. Particularly through their participation in civil society, care for environment, the maintenance and development of culture and the growth of the national economy, as well as local and regional economies. Each of these fields provides a reason for promotion of youth enterprise.

The National Youth Council Policy of Namibia (1993; 8-9) supports the promotion of self-employment amongst young women and men in Namibia, the Policy also highlights the special attention that should be paid young people who experience that should be paid to young people who experience particular difficulties as a result of past discrimination or other constraining circumstances, including rural youth, youth people with disabilities, marginalized unemployed urban youth (including street youth and street sitters) young women and demobilized youth.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Young women and men in Namibia today find it difficult to find a job- especially young women and people in rural areas. There are some 6,000 new formal sector jobs created in Namibia each year, however, in the same time approximately 16,000 young women and men leave school and began looking for work. In rural areas the situation is worse. Forty two per cent of all formal sector jobs are based in Windhoek and in areas such as The North, where some 600,000 people live, only 14 per cent of formal sector jobs can be found. More and more young women and men are starting their own businesses – creating their own jobs. The promotion of youth enterprise offers support for these people and develops new opportunities for all young men and women.

DEMANDS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Namibian Economy requires growth and development, not only to create new employment opportunities, but also to increase its capacity to provide the services and products that Namibians need and desire. The Republic of South Africa continues to provide over 90 percent of Namibia's consumer needs – many of which could be replaced with products produced in Namibia, the entrepreneurial efforts by young women and men can contribute to the development of local communities and Namibia a whole.

CHANGING PATTERNS OF WORK AND BUSINESS

Around the work there are new ways in which work and business is being organized since independence. Namibia has been opened to international trends and influences. Effective economic development requires Namibia to identify and adjust to these changes. Self employment is a part of changing culture and pattern of work and the broader changes occurring in national and international economies. Young business owners are becoming a more prominent part of our economy. The number of small and medium – sized enterprises (SME's) is increasingly dramatically when compared with their larger counter-parts and young people can be counted amongst this sector. Young people bring many new qualities to the process of starting and managing a business. International studies have found, however that youth enterprise, more often than not, forms a new and important segment of the poorly paid, casualised insecure and peripheral economy. It is, therefore, important to ensure that more young women and men successfully start their own business and contribute to the development of the country. That the skills and talents of

young people are utilized more fully to create new jobs and improve the quality of life of young people and their communities.

THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN BUSINESS

The National Youth Council Enterprise Promotion Policy recognizes the specific areas of need and opportunity young people considering or involved in enterprise face. Young people share many of the problems the general population experience in small business development including the following broad problems:

- Lack of business and management skill and abilities:
- Inadequate, inaccurate or non-existent financial records:
- Inability to cope effectively with fluctuating costs and prices; and
- Taking too much money from the business for personal uses.

In addition, there are many people in Namibia who have limited language and communication skills, as well as poor education which can affect their ability to deal with numbers (e.g. bookkeeping and stock control).

Research has found that in addition to the above problem many young men and women also face the following challenges when starting and operating their own enterprise:

- Limited life and work experiences- whilst there are many young people with abroad experiences, simply because of their age, young people usually have less life and work experiences than older people:
- Limited financial resources- many young people have been working for only a few years, while many more have studied for years, creating a situation where personal savings or property that may be used to start their own business is much less than for older people:
- Limited business networks and contacts- leading to isolation and increased pressure:
- Limited exposure to relevant role models which show that young people can succeed in business- this often means that young people in business see themselves as not being normal, being different to others, or being “a bit strange” compared to others their own age; and
- A lack of credibility often due to age discrimination- when older people, customers, suppliers or bank staffs do not take young people seriously.

Young people in business often experience six common problems, namely;

1. securing adequate start-up funds- leading to under-capitalization (i.e. starting a business without enough funds);
2. managing cash flow, especially dealing with bad debts and late payments;
3. coping with stress, especially without friends who understand the demands of self-employed;
4. employing the right staff and managing other people for the first time;
5. managing the expansion of the business; and
6. Expanding their share of the market.

Studies have shown that one of the greatest factors affecting the failure of small business is the lack of enough money. Starting with out enough of money can mean that the business never starts properly-products are not made properly, or too few are made, marketing and promotions are inadequate or level of service is not good enough.

Thus these are some of the areas where young men and women can be assisted, whether through training, counseling of information. However, these are not the only areas where young people can be assisted. When examining the experiences of young women and men in entering business there can be a number of points of resistance – things that can prevent a young man or woman from acting on their business idea. These include;

- Personal resistance, including a fear of authority, fear of the unknown, lack of awareness and understanding of the personal, social or cultural barriers that may exist and know how to deal with these, fear of risks, and lack of confidence to tackle the venue.
- Resistance to the venture itself, such as a lack of resource, competition from existing service providers or manufacturers, and lack of support from banks, sponsors, government, et, in providing start up funds.
- Resistance to change, resulting from a fear about having new ideas and new ways, people saying, “that twill never work here”, the Namibian work ethic (e.g. where school finishes at 12h30 pm, business close for lunch or take long holidays) creating pressure on those who are self-employed and required to work a considerably longer period and older people feeling threatened when young people take initiative.
- Lack of sufficient role models of young men and women succeeding in business. This tends to prevent young people from considering enterprise other than an option of last resort i.e. after period of prolonged unemployment.

Promoting youth enterprise requires practical assistance to young men and women to overcome these problems and areas of potential resistance.

ISSUES AFFECTING YOUNG WOMEN IN ENTERPRISE

Namibian society, like in many other countries, has strong traditions that influence the roles of women. Whilst many of these are changing as the rights of women are recognized, along with a greater acceptance for the wide range of roles women can play. There are still attitudes, procedures structures that can reduce the contribution of young women to their families, their communities and Namibia as a whole.

The Married Persons Equality Act (1996) was introduced by the Government of Namibia to ensure equality between men and women before the law. It ensures that women have the right to own property, sign contracts, open bank accounts, be a director of a company and conduct business affairs. Previously a married woman did not have these rights because the concept of “marital power” meant that a husband had legal power over his wife and her property. Now the concept of marital power no longer applies.

Despite some changes of law and the gradual shift in community attitudes, young women are often more likely to face the following problems when starting or operating a business than are young men:

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- Most young women are encouraged to stay at home rather than start their own business;
- Child care - finding someone to care for your children while you plan, start or manage your business is usually left to a woman;
- Sexual harassment – women are usually the victims of sexual harassment and experience it in business, at school, in fact, anywhere;
- Negative attitudes displayed by men toward women who are in business;
- Other family members can become insistent “hanger-on” demanding financial support; and where the presence of unemployed men in the house leads to abusive or threatening situations resulting from gender rivalry.

Young women possess many skills and experiences that can contribute to success in business. Promoting such success means addressing the particular problems young women are likely to face and to affirm and support them in their decisions regarding self-employment. The Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy, therefore, must become more responsive to the needs of young women and to promote women in business as role models.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The National Youth Enterprise Policy is based on the following key principles of effective enterprise promotion:

- commercial orientation – it must be recognized that youth enterprise promotion services are not the same as welfare or social services, businesses have a productive capacity, they create profit, they can re-pay loans and can grow to employ others;
- based upon initiative- youth enterprise promotion services should be based upon the initiative and enterprise that comes from young men and women, not the program or intervention itself;
- improve the capacity to manage risk – effective youth enterprise promotion services do not remove risk, instead they help young people deal with the risks that are part of every enterprise;
- appropriate targets – so that young people are not treated as a homogenous group successful enterprise programs identify variations amongst young women and men in their skills, experiences, status, needs, aspirations and capacity to obtain resources – all of which influence their ability to successfully establish and run small business;
- comprehensive in nature – addressing one area of need or constraint for young people in business will not be sufficient if others exist; successful enterprise promotion programs provide a wide range of services either under one roof (e.g. “one-stop-shop”) or in collaboration with either agencies;
- complementary services – ensuring the training, advice and support complements other services; this is particularly important for young women and men who may find selfemployment as a transition (e.g. from school to being self-employed);

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- sustainability – so that the operations of the programs are cost-effective and not reliant on a single source of external support, be it technical, Organizational or financial;
- equity – so that those in a position of disadvantage are assisted in ways that specifically address their situation, whilst remaining commercially oriented and sustainable; and
- gender inclusive – sensitive to the impact of gender on youth enterprise development and the problems experienced by young women in particular

POLICY AIM

The above aim shall be pursued through the following objectives:

1. To raise awareness amongst young women and men, as well as the broader community, of the potential for enterprise amongst young people.
2. To collaborate with other stakeholders, including all levels of government, non-government organizations, community based agencies, private sector and young women and men themselves in the promotion of youth enterprise.
3. to provide information and advice to relevant agencies as to how they can better incorporate youth enterprise into their programs
4. to monitor programs related to enterprise development to determine their success in engaging and supporting young men and women.

TARGET GROUPS

The Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy endeavors to address the needs, opportunities and capacities of all young women and men who aspire to, or are engaged in, youth enterprise activities. However, it is recognized that the following target groups require particular attention by NYC and other stakeholders involved in youth enterprise promotion.

UNEMPLOYED AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUNG PEOPLE

It is that young women and men who are unemployed and out-of-school face a particular and pressing crisis. The lack of employment leads to many additional problems and concerns for young people. It can lessen one's sense of self-worth, lessen household incomes, create frustration and boredom, and even lead one to consider behavior which is dangerous or illegal thus, the needs of young unemployed and out-of-school men and women deserve special attention

YOUNG WOMEN

Young women in Namibia face a number of difficult and constraining experiences as a result of their gender. Unemployment amongst young women is higher than amongst young men whilst impacts of sexism and sexual discrimination create difficult and constraining circumstances, especially in the business environment. Despite this, young women have many skills, experiences and opportunities that they can bring to bear on enterprise initiatives. Thus, the needs, aspirations and capacities of young women in relation to enterprise require particular attention.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS

The high rate of urbanization in Namibia is a result of uneven development, where the opportunities in urban centers of Namibia appear greater than in rural areas. To address this, it is essential that the rural areas of Namibia are provided with concerted development efforts, so that young people see less of a need to move to urban centers to pursue their economic aspirations. The promotion of youth enterprise within rural environments is therefore, extremely important.

YOUNG PEOPLE ALREADY IN BUSINESS

The Young Enterprise Promotion Policy recognizes the limitations of a policy which focuses on simply encouraging young people to start-up business, there are, in fact, many young women and men, who have demonstrated their enterprising spirit by already starting their own businesses. The initiative for these young people deserves recognition and their energy, tenacity and entrepreneurial spirit should be strengthened and built upon. These young Namibians are role models. We should celebrate, recognize and encourage their efforts and achievements.

STUDENTS

Young men and women who are currently in school, college or university will soon be leaving their place of study in search of employment. The sad reality is that many of these skilled and well-educated young people will not be able to succeed in their efforts to secure a job because the job market is limited. It is imperative, therefore, that these young students be given guidance and support in their consideration of enterprise.

YOUTH ENTERPRISE PROMOTION STRATEGIES

The National Youth Council shall undertake the following strategies in the promotion of youth enterprise across the country.

THE ANNUAL YOUTH EXPO

THE Namibian Youth Enterprise Expo shall be a one and half day event for all young people and youth and business development agencies in Namibia. It will run as an annual event, building upon the successes of the Expos held in 1997 and 1998. The annual Expo shall provide opportunities for young women and men in business to display their products, to learn more about business development opportunities, and to network, the NYC will work with all relevant stakeholders, including private sector sponsors and the Municipality of Windhoek.

YOUTH ENTERPRISE PROMOTION

The NYC is eager to create a focal point for youth enterprise development within the country. Central to this will be the creation of a Youth Enterprise Promotion Service (YEPS). The aim of the YEPS shall be to create a focal point for the promotion of businesses that are owned and managed by young women and men aged from 15 to 30 years. In pursuing the above aim, the following objectives shall be achieved.

1. To compile, analyze and distribute information on youth enterprise including programs and services promoting youth enterprise as well as the experiences of young women in business.
2. To develop and support a culture of enterprise among young women and men, within and beyond the school system.
3. To provide practical support, networking, training, and assistance in enterprise development and to address the barriers to self-employment for young men and women and assist them into self employment.

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4. to promote the development of a youth chamber of commerce and promote chamber membership and participation amongst young women and men who are in business;
5. To support existing youth and business development organizations in their work with young entrepreneurs.

The NYC shall prepare a funding proposal with the aim of raising financial support for the YEPS.

SUPPORTING THE JUNIOR CHAMBER

Whilst the Junior Chamber Namibia has been established as an independent organization of young people in business, the NYC will continue to provide administrative and organizational support where ever possible. This will include training and support in the leadership and management of chambers of commerce.

PROMOTING THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCES

The NYC will take active steps to promote and facilitate the exchange of information and experiences of people involved in youth enterprise from within Namibia, across the southern African region and internationally. One of the first activities within this strategy will be the organization of a Study Tour of youth enterprise promotion initiatives in the United Kingdom. This study tour (which is dependent upon the raising of donor funds) shall expose participants to renown youth enterprise programs and provide information on issues affecting the possible implementation of similar programs in Namibia Youth Enterprise Services (YES) International, London will manage the study tour within the U.K. Donor funds for this strategy are currently being sought.

TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The NYC recognizes the critical importance of improving the skills, knowledge and understanding of young women and men, and youth organizations, in regards to enterprise development and management. In 1997, the NYC produced a manual on youth enterprise development, which can be used as a basis for training in youth enterprise throughout the country. Thus, the NYC and the Regional Youth Forums shall work together to organize and conduct regional training programs.

REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF YOUTH ENTERPRISE

There are a wide range of policies and programs that are adopted by government, banking institutions, training and development organizations that can affect the potential of new and existing youth enterprises. In some cases, these policies and programs are based against young people and require change. The NYC shall advocate on behalf of young people in business, to bring about such changes, this will be done in close consultation and collaboration with the Junior Chamber Namibia.

PROMOTING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The NYC recognizes the range of significant influences that exist to affect a young man or woman in their decision to start a new enterprise. The promotion of an enabling environment, one that encourages a young person to consider self-employment as a career option and improves her or his access to resources and services, is of great importance to the NYC. Specifically, the promotion of an enabling environment for youth enterprise shall entail the:

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- Promotion of role models through electronic and print media, as well as through exhibitions;
- Facilitation and support of networks and associations of young entrepreneurship; and
- Creation of links between youth development programs (e.g. Young Achiever Namibia) and youth enterprise promotion initiatives.

THE ROLE OF OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

The NYC recognizes the important role other stakeholders can play in the promotion of youth enterprise throughout the country. These stakeholders include;

- Schools, colleges and universities;
- Local communities and community-based organizations;
- Regional Youth Forums;
- Government, including Central, Regional and Local Government; and
- The private sector.

The role each of these stakeholders can play in the promotion of youth enterprise is examined in more detail below.

SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The school environment can have an important impact upon young women and men and is a significant influence on the life and career aspirations of young people. “Enterprise education” has become an important part of many education and training institutions around the world. It is seen as an important ingredient in preparing young women and men for their movement from school, colleges or universities to the workplace for students to understand and consider self-employment as a career option. There are two general types of enterprise education. Learning about business development, administration and management and developing the skills of enterprise through teaching methods that encourage responsibility, initiative and problem solving.

The purpose of enterprise education can vary according to the type and level of education institutions involved. In schools, for example the main objectives of enterprise education are to teach and encourage enterprise to students and to foster their personal development. Where as at higher education institutions students may be exposed to learning situations which develop their skills for action planning and implementation to encourage creativity and develop their skills in time and personal management. There are different types of enterprise education activities that can be used by schools, colleges and universities. These include a whole-of- curriculum approach where enterprise forms a part of every subject affecting all levels of the teaching curriculum and a cross- curriculum approach, also known as “education through enterprise”. This approach helps students develop enterprise skills such as risk-taking initiatives, problem solving and possibly encouraging students to start their own business.

Enterprise programs such as business courses that enable students to plan and manage their own business as well as career information that introduce young men and women as early as possible to the concepts of enterprising behavior and self-employment as a realistic post-school career option have also prove valuable. Similarly, introducing teachers to small business and industry through exposure programs and helping teachers understand the dynamics of small businesses better and appreciate the value of self-employment as a career option can have long-lasting benefits.

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In Namibia there are a number of programs that have been designed around some of this education of enterprise themes. At A. Shipena High School, in Katutura the A. Shipena Commerce Club has been created by teachers and students to create links between the high school and industry, as well as to broaden the knowledge of students about business and self-employment. Initiatives such as these are supported by the Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy.

LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANISATIONS

Young women and men are an important, if often unrealized, source of skill, energy, creativity and a vision for local communities. The mobilization of young men and women in local development efforts is an important aspect of community economic development; not only because they are an important part of the community, but also because they are a potent resource that the community can benefit from.

There are two ways in which local communities can create an environment for youth enterprise, by promoting young people's participation in economic planning and actions and through specific measures directed to supporting business development amongst young women and men. Local communities are coming to recognize the contribution that young people can play in positive economic change. This can be done through a range of actions, including;

- Inclusion of young people's representation on committees, task forces, and on any community economic development initiatives;
- Formation of youth councils with specific mandate to provide a young person's perspective on key issues affecting their community, and to mobilize peer involvement;
- Instigation of regular youth forums which enable young men and women to reflect on the perceptions of their community (its strengths and limitations), key concerns and ideas for practical action;
- Use of competitions to elicit young people's perspective and ideas on economic development; and
- Acknowledgment of young people as leaders and contributors to local and regional development through annual event where young people are recognized for their contribution and to highlight role models.

Local communities can promote youth enterprise through a number of specific actions. Some of the most effective ways are to;

- Promote role models and raise awareness so that the potential for young women and men to become involved in business are recognized more broadly, by young people and the broader community;
- Address age-based barriers and biases – the things that prevent or dissuade young men and women from starting and succeeding in business (e.g. community attitudes which say “young people are too young to succeed in business”)
- Identify and utilize young people's networks as a means of communicating information on youth enterprise rather than relying on general(mainstream) networks which are often not given much attention by young people;

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- Involving young men and women in the process of planning for community development so that they become better able to identify enterprise opportunities and more likely to seek the support from their families and the broader community;
- Broaden the networks of young men and women in business – to help overcome isolation and the limited business and support networks that young women and men often have; and
- Make business development agencies more “youth –friendly” so that young women and men use them more often.

Specifically, the Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy proposes that community-based and non-government youth organizations help young women and men to explore, enter or expand their business. They can do this through direct and participatory activities that;

- Provide or arrange for the provision of business training and advice for young women and men;
- Assist with the identification of enterprise needs and the design and management of projects that promote youth enterprise;
- Promote a greater awareness amongst young women and men regarding the opportunities that exist in the field of enterprise.

THE ROLE OF REGIONAL YOUTH FORUMS

Regional Youth Forums provide an important form of youth and community organization that can be used to promote and support the interest of young people in business. Specifically, Regional Youth Forums should;

- Organize training workshops in enterprise development and management;
- Provide assistance to regional chapters of Junior Chamber Namibia;
- Undertake an assessment of regional needs, opportunities and capacities regarding youth enterprise; and
- Advocate for change in policies and programs affecting youth enterprise in the region.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

There are a number of different types of roles Government can play in the promotion of youth enterprise. The NYC believes the major roles of Government should be to provide and environment in which enterprise can flourish and to enable young people to improve their skills and capacities for business development and management. It is recognized however, that there are three levels of government that should be involved in these efforts;

Central Government, therefore, should promote enterprise by:

- Reducing regional and social imbalances so that people from disadvantaged backgrounds and disadvantaged areas (e. g. rural areas) are able to access the resources they require to successfully start and manage a business;
- Promoting the up-grading of skills through its institution of education and training; and

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- Addressing the needs of the unemployed through programs that directly enable this group of young men and women to consider and enter self-employment.

Regional Government should consult with youth organization regarding the identification of business development opportunities, through regional development plans and strategies and the ways through which youth enterprise can be encourage and assisted in the regions

Local Government can assist in the promotion of youth enterprise through a variety of actions that may include the provision of information and direct assistance to young people on enterprise and the legal and regulatory requirements of running an enterprise in the area. Local Governments can also act as a catalyst and facilitator in identifying enterprise needs and opportunities. Finally, they can introduce specific policies and regulations that promote local small businesses (e.g. local purchasing policies) and, in particular, young owners and managers.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector has to play an important role in youth enterprise development. This can be achieved through the supply of commercialized services, including the cooperation and sub-contracting between small and bigger firms, partnerships, joint ventures, franchises and internships. Involvement of the private sector is of fundamental importance to the effective promotion of youth enterprises at national and local levels. In the first instance, it is extremely important that local business women and men are linked to the organizations and programs that promote youth enterprise, whether this is through represented on the boards of management of local projects or be acting as a business mentor. This will provide an important connection between young people with business aspirations and the local business community and will help local youth enterprise programs to adopt a business-like approach to their work. The support and participation of local chambers of commerce and other forms of small business membership organizations are also an important element in their success. In particular, the JCN would benefit from practical support (e.g. funds, technical assistance and guidance) from the private sector. The NYC shall where required facilitate support linkages between private sector and youth enterprise promotion activities. The council will create opportunities to publicly recognize, acknowledge and reward private sector firms that are active in supporting youth enterprise in a practical and sustainable manner.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

The Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy shall be implemented and monitored be the Employment Desk of the National Youth Council. The Head of Employments Desk shall report to the National Youth Council on an annual basis detailing:

- Activities of the National Youth Council stemming from the policy;
- Brief outline of youth enterprise activities undertaken by various agencies, including government, non-government and private sector agencies in Namibia
- Key issues affecting the development of youth enterprises in Namibia; and
- Proposed activities for the forthcoming year.

The NYC will undertake a revision of the Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy in the last quarter of 2000. this review will involve broad consultation with youth women and men, the Regional Youth Forums, Government agencies (at all levels) and other business and community development agencies.

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The National Youth Council welcomes and encourages young people and youth organizations to comment on the Youth Enterprise Promotion Policy, at any time and is eager to work with other stakeholders and development organizations for the promotion of self-employment and enterprise among young women and men.