At Youth Business International we know that entrepreneurship is an instinct shared by people regardless of their background or circumstances.

From Silicon Valley to the Rift Valley, millions of young people share the desire to start a business, they can call their own. These young people are willing to work hard and take risks to create a sustainable future, for both themselves and their families.

Globally, these young people tell us that they are not able to access the support they need. This is often because they are not recognised as entrepreneurs in the traditional sense of the term.

Pema Seyden (pictured, above) may not look like a stereotypical young entrepreneur – but her successful dairy business is built on the same entrepreneurial principle, that drives thousands of youth led startups across the world.

This is what an entrepreneur looks like.

Every year YBI helps tens of thousands of young entrepreneurs like Pema Seyden to start and grow sustainable businesses in their local community. Starting a business increases competition in the market, creates jobs and promotes sustainable growth in the greater economy – all of which are key to tackling youth unemployment. After all, every business is created by a person who starts off with little more than a good idea and the conviction to make it happen. Having the courage to take that first step is crucial, whether it’s dairy farming or databases. This is what entrepreneurship looks like.

Pema Seyden used a zero interest loan from YBI member in Bhutan, The Loden Entrepreneurship Programme, to start her Druksel Diary Farm.
Each year our network supports thousands of young entrepreneurs to start and grow their own business.

We operate at the member level as an accelerator for every single connection in our network – allowing members direct exposure to the most effective youth entrepreneurship solutions in the world. Everything we do is geared towards improving this support and making it more effective, ultimately allowing members to support more young people and create more jobs year on year.

At the core of our model is the provision of training, access to finance and a connection to a volunteer mentor for every new entrepreneur. Although YBI members each provide services which are appropriate to their local context, they all deliver services based on YBI’s proven support methodology.

Our Network starts a business every
30 minutes | 7 days a week | 365 days a year

Youth unemployment challenge

There are 71 million unemployed young people worldwide and 156 million young workers living in poverty – youth employment remains a global challenge and a top policy concern.

Youth unemployment is one of the principal social and economic challenges facing the world today. Long spells of unemployment can have serious long-term effects for young people, such as reduced earnings and social exclusion. It is estimated that one year of unemployment during youth can reduce annual earnings at age 42 by up to 21% (Gregg and Tominey, 2015). An extra three months of unemployment prior to age of 23, results in an extra two months of unemployment, on average, between the ages of 28 and 33.

Prolonged unemployment magnifies these problems and could increase the chances that it is passed on to the next generation. In addition to these pronounced individual costs, the unemployed represent a significant store of unused economic resources which lowers output and the potential for economic growth.

When considered alongside the wider social and community damage caused by unchecked youth unemployment, it is clear that more needs to be done at both a local and global level. YBI is making a real difference, and thanks to our network there are thousands of young people running businesses today, who could otherwise be unemployed. We are proud of our impact so far and we know we need to do more.

Under-served young people aged 18–35 who want to start and grow a business with potential for employment creation

Training
Access to capital
Mentoring
Empowerment
Job creation
Stronger communities
Business stereotypes

Our approach
Why a network?

A true network is a structure that places every individual at its centre. By bringing together leading young entrepreneurship support organisations into one cooperative and responsive unit, we are creating a knowledge driven community which is accessible to all.

Our network has decades of experience of working with young entrepreneurs, mentors and businesses – to create a new generation of youth led businesses. Our decentralised approach empowers individuals and places decision making responsibility closer to the young people we support.

The YBI network team exists to help member organisations deliver effective support to more young entrepreneurs each year – with ever greater levels of success.

Our network supports members in the following key ways:

Sharing knowledge
YBI brings members together, both online and in person to share best practice. Working with member organisations and partners, like the Salesforce Foundation, we use cutting edge technology to build new tools – connecting our members to each other and creating sustainable communities of practice.

Guaranteeing quality
We accredit each YBI member regularly, using fully independent consultants. This is so donors, partners and entrepreneurs can be confident in the quality of our membership and our ability to deliver meaningful impact, across a wide variety of local contexts.

Strengthening capacity
By strengthening our members we strengthen the network. From the provision of end to end cloud technology for operational delivery, to researching the latest best practice and innovation from the world’s leading experts in entrepreneurship – we empower our members with the tools they need, delivering effective support to more young entrepreneurs each year.

Maximizing influence
We are a global network that speaks with one voice on issues of youth unemployment and entrepreneurship. To do this we work together, from the smallest members to our largest.

Driving partnership
The network team builds partnerships between our membership, public and private stakeholders – to deliver shared value with meaningful impact. In 2015, Accenture announced that it was expanding its commitment to our network, with a new US$5 million award. This funding will enable YBI to equip up to 50,000 young people with the skills and support they need to start, as well as grow, a business. We are connecting our members to sources of expertise and funding that have a real impact on young people.

Achieving scale
In the last 12 months, five new members joined the network. Each additional member benefits from our existing expertise and brings skills, knowledge and experiences – which collectively become part of the shared YBI experience.

Maintaining excellence

Youth Business International is an invitation only network and we are purposely selective about our membership.

We only work with the most effective and impact focused organisations, who have a proven track record of delivering quality support to young entrepreneurs.

In order to maintain the quality of the network, we oversee a rigorous accreditation process for all our members. We accredit members, so donors, partners and entrepreneurs can be confident in the quality of our membership – as well as our ability to deliver meaningful impact, across a wide variety of local contexts.

The accreditation process is supported by EY and the Worshipful Company of Management Consultants. Our assessment procedures ensure that every penny invested in the network is delivered to organisations with proven effectiveness.

Betty Oyella Alana launched her private nursery and primary school with the support of YBI member Enterprise Uganda
Youth Business International is a global network made up of independent, locally led and locally owned organisations.

Our global network of national members is supported by a dedicated network team, based in London. YBI also has a regional office in Bogota, Colombia.
In 2015, our work helped change the lives of thousands of young people – through network members on six continents, all working with a proven evidence led approach to youth entrepreneurship. YBI members operating in 42 countries helped 13,219 new young people start or grow their businesses, providing entrepreneurship training to 52,698 individuals.

These young people (47% female: 53% male), will create additional jobs, strengthen local supply chains – bringing useful products and services to their local communities. YBI aims for each new business to create approximately three additional jobs. On average, 70% of these newly established businesses are operational for a minimum of three years.

YBI manages a comprehensive data collection process, from our members on a quarterly basis. We ask 12 key questions about the work they are doing. This raw data about the scope and scale of our operation is fed into our data management system – allowing us to produce detailed dashboards of the activity of the YBI network. This information enables us to quantify our global impact and to help members meet their challenges.

In 2015 the YBI network members:

• Started 14,279 new businesses
• Helped 5,836 existing businesses to grow
• Provided training to 52,698 young people
• Engaged 120,484 young entrepreneurs through awareness raising campaigns

Also, in 2015:

• More 1,000 staff were working for YBI network members globally
• Of the businesses we started 6,348 were in low and middle income countries
• Of the young people we supported 40% were female

After the initial training, I joined Youth Business Mongolia business club meetings, which helped motivate me and make my idea more concrete.

Purevdorj Enkhjargal
In 2015, YBI has helped 14,279 young people in over 40 countries to start their own businesses. These young people are the ultimate end product of the collective work of our network and a manifestation of our shared vision – entrepreneurship for all.

Empowered with the skills, confidence and capital they need, these young YBI entrepreneurs head out to build new business. Strengthening communities, developing local supply chains and creating new sources of sustainable employment. They are the building blocks of a bright, sustainable future. That is what motivates me and the other staff in this incredible network. I am so proud that due to our shared work, there are young people who set up businesses, that would not be doing so, were it not for the support of our members.

Together we really are empowering and supporting young people 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. However, although we should celebrate our achievements, we must recognise the ever present challenge of youth unemployment. It is my firm belief, that in this time of great global uncertainty, the work of YBI is more relevant and urgent than ever.

As YBI grows, bringing new ideas and approaches from around the world, so our network changes. This is an exciting time for YBI as we develop our approaches and structures, making us better equipped to serve our growing network and deliver increasingly complex round-the-clock services to a growing cohort of young people.

One way this has happened over the past twelve months, is our increasing focus on the year round support we offer to members. Last year we launched the Capacity Development Services marketplace, funded in large part by partners at Accenture.

This online platform is where our growing membership can bid for support, in areas like mentoring, training and technology – as and when they need it, on their own growth journey. Devolving this responsibility to our members and other expert teams in the network, is an important step on our journey towards being a truly decentralized and global institution – which responds effectively to the needs of members and entrepreneurs alike.

Over the next year, we will continue to make changes and develop our network in a way that places our members at the very centre of what we do. I am very excited about YBI’s next chapter. Thank you all for your ongoing support far.

Together we’re changing lives.

Voices from the network

“Working within the YBI network has been incredibly positive for the Loden Entrepreneurship Programme (LEP). We are one of the first civil society organisations in Bhutan and having a connection to a global network of organisations has really helped us to become established. From working together to develop our mentoring capacity, to participating in bilateral proposals with other YBI members in the region – YBI has helped us develop our services, broker new partnerships and grow to be one of Bhutan’s leading entrepreneurship organisations.”

Dorji Tashi, Executive Officer
The Loden Entrepreneurship Programme

“We worked with YBI to launch Youth Business Jordan in 2015. The YBI network delivered the required experience and support we needed to help develop a robust, scalable programme – which will empower aspiring young Jordanians with business ideas to fulfil their dreams. We’re looking forward to a long and fruitful membership of YBI.”

Farah Al-Mehdawi, Programme Manager
Youth Business Jordan

“The YBI network has provided invaluable support in the launch and growth of Youth Business USA. From the highly skilled support of their team to the ‘matchmaker’ role that YBI played in connecting us with Accenture – we are very grateful to YBI and to be a part of this impactful network of organisations with shared missions.”

Bo Ghiradelli, CEO
Youth Business USA
Born in Chile and raised in Sweden since the age of four, Rodrigo became an entrepreneur in the country that adopted him and his family. He is now giving back to society by creating employment and providing migrants in Sweden the opportunity to build their own lives – promoting social inclusion and integration.

As a young adult Rodrigo worked in a range of insecure jobs to make ends meet, working as a food vendor, online seller and even a street entertainer. He always nurtured a dream to run his own business but assumed a lack of capital would mean this was always out of reach. With the support of Swedish YBI member NyföretagarCentrum, he was able to turn his dream into reality. Today he manages a successful events business.

More than anything, he needed some advice regarding his business plan and sought advice to help him launch his business. NyföretagarCentrum provided him with mentoring and coaching that really helped build his confidence and solidify the core ideas around his business: Stagehand.nu.

Rodrigo freely admits that his vision would not have been possible, had it not been for the time spent working with the YBI network.

Today, Rodrigo’s business is growing and he is making it possible for other migrants to transition into the Swedish labour market. Thanks to its fluid employee structure, with some 200 employees available for on-call projects, Stagehand.nu is able to bring more staff on to events setting, than its competitors in the local market. Rodrigo therefore, offers clients the opportunity to manage bigger projects with high quality results.

Rodrigo hopes to grow his business, Stagehand.nu and expand its services within the construction sector, alongside event management. Part of his vision is the desire to change the perception of this type of business; empowering clients as much as employees. For Rodrigo, employees are not mere workers; they are ambassadors of the company. In fact, one of the reasons why Stagehand’s reputation is so positive and stands out, is precisely because each employee is proud to spread the word about the company – as well as the work they do.

CASE STUDY:
RODRIGO PEREZ, SWEDEN

Sandra Letio runs her own business, thanks to the support and funding of Enterprise Uganda, the YBI member based in Uganda.

I love cleaning. My mum just calls me and says, “Sandra, can you come and help me clean the house”? By the time I leave she’s like, “wow!” So, that’s when I thought of starting a business making soap.

I got my first soap recipe from a man who my mother knew. He told me the ingredients, but not how to mix them. My first batch was in two buckets. I missed some ingredients out and as a result, the final product was not good. However, my customers did not tell me at first. I approached my local YBI member, Enterprise Uganda and asked them for help. They supported me with a range of ideas about how to take my business to the next level.

My key motivation was a desire to make my soap better – I learned to achieve that. I wrote to the Executive Director of the Uganda Industrial Research Institute to ask them how I could improve my product. After a while they called me and said, “Sandra, your letter’s gone through and we’re going to help you”. That was my turning point to start.

I also had to formalise the business, to be able to sell and on the advice from Enterprise Uganda, I registered the company. I submitted so many names but most of the names were rejected. First it was Dream International – but later on I chose Pelere, which means ‘awesome’ in my tribe.

My biggest setback was losing 35 cans of soap. This was 1.5m shillings (US$500) that went down the drain. At the time, we didn’t have a standard formulation, it was supposed to be green but it went brown. When the buyer came to pick the cans up he refused to buy them and I had to give it away.

I’m humbled by my success, but I’m scared sometimes too. I realise that I’m becoming a role model in the local area and people are interested in my views. In my free time, I’m writing a book called ‘Things a Woman Should Know’ – I hope one day to get it published.

“I had never thought about needing a mentor but this was the time I realised why I would need one. I went to her and I cried! She told me, “you can do it”, she pushed me and kept on inspiring me. She was the only person who believed in me.”

CASE STUDY:
SANDRA LETIO, UGANDA
On September 25th 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations, in New York. The SDGs are a set of universal goals, targets and indicators, that UN member states will be expected to use – to frame their agendas and political policies over the next 15 years. The YBI network contributes to the achievement of the SDGs through its very mission – enabling young people to access the support they need to start or grow businesses thus creating jobs and triggering sustainable economic development.

For the first time ever, the SDGs included specific targets around employment, decent work and innovation. YBI’s alignment with the goals comes around goal 4 (Quality Education), goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth) and goal 17 (Partnerships for the goals). Most specifically, the YBI network contributes to the following targets:

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.

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

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment, as well as decent work for all women and men – including for young people and persons with disabilities. Also, equal pay for work of equal value.

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training.

17.16 Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise, share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources – to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries.

17.17 Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships – building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

Whilst supporting entrepreneurship contributes to achieving these targets, the young entrepreneurs themselves are contributing to the SDGs through their businesses – from ending hunger to gender equality and protecting the environment. The entrepreneurs supported by the YBI network cover the entire SDGs spectrum.

The focus on the development agenda is on sustainability. Across the global Youth Business International network, we have been working for more than 15 years’ supporting underserved young people, to start or grow their own business – thus tackling unemployment and advancing sustainable economic development. In our experience, multi-stakeholder partnerships work.

The YBI network brings together resources from various sectors, working towards positively impacting communities around the world. We partner with both public and private sectors (often together), local and regional civil society organisations, the education sector and individuals. We use this inclusive model and adapt it to the local context of each country, where we are present. Over the coming years, YBI will continue to align with the SDGs by running impact-driven partnerships with the global community and helping to work towards achieving these important targets.
The work of YBI and its network members is only possible thanks to the ongoing support of organisations from around the world. These institutions work with YBI globally, and directly with individual country members, to empower young people to start businesses and reach their potential.

Thank you to our partners

Why partner with the YBI Network?

Join a committed group of corporations, foundations, public sector agencies and individuals who are working with YBI to address youth unemployment globally.

In addition to critical financial support, many of our partners provide programme participants with market and employment opportunities combined with world-class business and industry advice, helping to create a thriving private sector in the countries where we work.

Please email info@youthbusiness.org to start the conversation.

GLOBAL IMPACT
Support programmes that transform lives in local communities around the world

EVIDENCE LED
Invest in a market-based approach to economic development that is sustainable. Creating jobs, incomes and hope – instead of dependency.

SHARED VALUE
Tap into new markets and sourcing opportunities, that also create benefits for poor communities.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION
Gain visibility as a leader in social responsibility through joint public relations and cause marketing campaigns.

This is what an entrepreneur looks like

Chavi’s business is providing graduate studies to women. She provides an alternative route to academic studies, while respecting religious and social constraints

Api Andrela’s is a family run beekeeping company formed by Ariela Berrios and Laura Cares

api_andrela@youthbusiness.org