

Youth With A Mission

Key Statements and Principles on Business as Mission

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A: Business as Mission in YWAM

What is Business as Mission?

‘Business as mission’ (BAM) is a term being used in contemporary missions to describe the integration of ministry goals and business goals to make an impact for God’s Kingdom.

Business as mission is a strategy for the specific purpose of the transformation of people and communities: spiritually, economically and socially – for the glory of God. This strategy is outworked through a viable and sustainable business which has Kingdom of God values, purpose, perspective and impact.

Business as mission is to accelerate the completion of the Great Commission through a new avenue of missionary service. By keeping our BAM initiatives clearly focused on missional goals, they should enhance, not lessen, the fervour and sacrificial commitment of YWAMers in their ministries.

Business as Mission is a strategy to advance the work of the great commission and is not **primarily** about generating funds or doing business for any other motivation. In its primary motivation BAM is distinct as a strategy from 'Business for Income Generation'. Business as mission is more than conducting business in a godly or ethical way, or even doing business to generate finances to fund other kinds of ministry, although these are much needed. Producing an income (through profitability) and running a business to a high standard are foundations of any sustainable business and should be outcomes of business as mission - however, these are not the end goal or primary motivation. Good business practice will not alone point people to Jesus, for that a business must be more intentional. Business as mission is a distinctive strategy where the spiritual, physical or social needs of people and communities are addressed in and through the business activities – the business is the ‘ministry’ in itself.

For Guidelines on **Business as Mission** see Sections A & B. For Guidelines about other kinds of business in YWAM, see Section C.

Why is Business as Mission an important missional strategy?

YWAM recognises that there is a growing momentum internationally towards the model of business as mission (also known as ‘transformational business’, ‘great commission companies’ or ‘kingdom business’). God is stirring up a dual calling to business **and** mission amongst his people globally. This

‘movement’ is strategic for many reasons, not least because there is an open door to business in almost every part of the world.

Business involves many relationships and is an ideal environment to witness and disciple in the context of everyday life. A role in business offers a model for new believers to follow and the opportunity to impart biblical principles within the business and beyond. Business provides an understandable and credible role in the community and an opportunity to bring a Godly influence to its people, leaders and institutions. Business may be the best and most stable means to bring the Gospel – through word and deed – to an unreached people or omega zone. Business is a God-given means to sustain and multiply resources and can bring hope and empowerment to the poor or marginalized by providing jobs, income and dignity. Business can strengthen the church in areas where Christians are marginalised or persecuted. There is the potential for business to bring a whole expression of the Gospel, addressing spiritual and physical needs, with the power to transform people, communities and societies.

Strategies for YWAMers in Business as Mission (BAM)

There are many valid approaches, methods or strategies for engaging in business as mission, these will vary according to the business and/or ministry objectives in each location. Three broad approaches are: i. starting a business, ii. enabling others to start businesses and iii. working in partnership with a business.

o **Starting (or joining) a business with ministry/mission objectives**

To make a successful business requires hard work, specialist skills, adequate capital and a long term commitment. Starting or joining a business with ministry/mission objectives should be entered into with care and with the appropriate support, accountability and an understanding of good practice (see section B below). There are some challenges to balancing the financial goals alongside kingdom ministry goals which are required of a sustainable and fruitful business as mission initiative. However, there are also many opportunities to extend God’s kingdom through business.

From the start, the business should have a kingdom motivation, purpose and plan, with clear objectives aimed towards the discipleship and transformation of people and communities.

o **Enabling others to start businesses through equipping and training**

Helping others start businesses is a particular need in poor or persecuted communities where the provision of a sustainable income and a dignified and stable place in society is often lacking. Another aim may be to encourage and mobilise gifted indigenous Christians to engage in the business sphere in their community or nation.

This approach may take the form of running a micro-enterprise development programme, starting a small business specifically to model and train in business skills or job creation, running a business incubation/training centre or providing business coaching.

This may also simply involve encouraging, mobilising or training those with a God-given passion and calling for both mission and business to take up their role in the great commission, whether in their own nation or cross-culturally.

o **Partnership with a business that has ministry/mission objectives**

YWAM often has a great number of resources and experiences that could be beneficial to a partner ‘kingdom business’. In turn partnering with a business may open up opportunities for YWAMers to minister into the community and may be a better model in some situations than actually starting a business.

Some possible contributions to a partnership include:

- Sharing local knowledge, support networks, literature and tools for evangelism or discipleship.
- Providing mentoring, pastoral care or accountability.
- Providing cross-cultural or language training.
- Running joint ministry projects or discipleship or other training programmes inside or outside the business. Providing access to trainers.
- Mobilising interest, prayer support, personnel or interns.

Types of relationship to YWAM:

1. YWAM staff

The person or team involved in the business are YWAM staff who are fully accountable to the local/national YWAM leader(s). They are committed as staff to the YWAM team in the location and nation. However, they are day to day involved in the business or training programme which provides the main outlet for their ministry. They abide by the code of practice and principles outlined for YWAM staff doing business as mission (see section B below). The YWAM staff or team is considered to be working out their service/ministry with YWAM through the business.

2. In association with YWAM

The person or team who at heart considers themselves a YWAMer, they have done a DTS and have had past experience working with a YWAM team. They are not YWAM staff, but have a connection of relationship with a YWAM leader or team which they want to maintain in some form. They cannot or do not want to bring their business as mission strategy under a YWAM leader or follow the code of practice and principles for business as mission in YWAM – therefore it is most appropriate for them to be in association with YWAM. In this case a relationship or partnership is continued and an understanding is reached over any areas of collaboration between YWAM and the business. Terms of association are to be worked out locally (perhaps using a ‘memo of understanding’ tool). There could be some kind of ongoing input from a YWAM leader which may be either informal or formal e.g. as a member of the Board of the business.

In some cases there may be a transition from one type of relationship to another during the life of the Business as Mission initiative.

B: Best Practices and Other Resources for Business as Mission

Best practices and principles for business as mission in YWAM

YWAM staff or teams involved in business as mission must:

1. Abide by the YWAM Foundational Values.
2. Aim for excellence in business ethics and practice.
3. Establish accountability and ongoing evaluation locally.
4. Avoid conflicts of interest and other areas of vulnerability by following good business as mission principles.

Principles for a YWAM business as mission initiative:

- a. The business venture must be led by a person with experience in YWAM, who understands our values and culture and who has had ministry and some leadership experience. We recommend that they start with a team and not alone.
- b. The venture must have a valid and workable business plan, with a clear ministry plan including goals and objectives.

- c. There should be sound business expertise either within the group that is involved in the BAM initiative or available to them. It is strongly recommended that the YWAMers identify a business person, advisory group or legal board (if required), as a source of wise council who can evaluate this plan and provide ongoing input, especially for the business goals. Where there is a regional/national YWAM business advisory group/coordinator, they are expected to evaluate the business/ministry plan.
- d. The business entity must be structurally and legally separate from YWAM. There must be no mixing of funds of the business entity and the YWAM legal entity, capital raised for the business should be accounted for separately. Leadership structures should also be distinct. (See also the document ‘Legal and Structural Checklist for BAM in YWAM’).
- e. In particular, there must be protection for YWAM from any liability of the business. Use of the YWAM name and logo should not put the business under the legal covering of YWAM. The registered name of the business must not be exactly Youth With A Mission or YWAM (or any other name that identifies YWAM in a particular language or nation), neither should the business logo be the YWAM logo. In addition, a separately registered for-profit business should not use YWAM resources/facilities except through a rental agreement.
- f. A clear line of accountability must be established with a local (in some cases national or regional) YWAM leader or leaders, who must evaluate the business as mission objectives.
- g. A MOU (memo of understanding) must be agreed together with the YWAM leader(s). The MOU could include issues concerning: the ongoing evaluation of ministry goals, ownership of the business, allocation of finances, sustaining a support team, participation in YWAM staff activities and YWAM obligations. (See document ‘Guidelines for establishing an MOU’).
- h. There should be at least a yearly evaluation of the business and ministry plan and the terms of the MOU with the designated YWAM leader(s).
- i. A designated person should provide pastoral care and oversight for the YWAM staff through YWAM structures. The impact of the business as mission initiative should be regularly evaluated and discussed in relation to the spiritual, emotional and physical health and personal/family goals of the YWAMer involved in BAM.
- j. YWAM values building relationship-based support networks and encourages YWAM staff to actively build prayer and financial support teams. Our values include that *‘YWAMers give themselves, their time and talents to God through the mission with no expectation of remuneration’* – this addresses our motivation for being in ministry in YWAM and includes those involved in business as mission. Alongside this, there are likely to be legal circumstances where YWAMers involved in business as mission could or should draw income from the business.
- k. Careful guardianship over YWAM’s identity is needed in some cases. In nations where there is an overt YWAM presence i.e. visible teams and bases operating under the name of YWAM, great care must be taken so that the local community/church do not begin to perceive YWAM primarily as a business rather than a charitable (non-profit) missionary organisation. Although the business as mission ministry could be openly known as a ministry of YWAM, it should not obscure the other YWAM ministry activities of that operating location. This may mean that in certain situations business as mission initiatives should be limited in size, at the discretion of the local (or national) YWAM leader or move into association with YWAM in order to prevent this confusion arising. Special care must be taken in the case of prominent YWAM leaders – they should not be perceived primarily as business people in these nations.

The factor of personal motivation

It is essential to thoroughly evaluate the business as mission strategy and plan and employ good principles and practices. However, the least visible and often most crucial factor for any fruitful business as mission initiative is personal motivation. Just as anything else, business as mission can be distorted and fail in its objectives because of sinful and ungodly motivations, and Jesus warned about the love of money. It is important in business as mission to carefully examine and guard personal motivations so that they are rooted in seeking God's Kingdom first. Any motivation based in selfishness, pride or greed will bear bad fruit. Instead, our motive is to humbly and sacrificially serve those who are needy, fulfilling Christ's Great Commandment and Great Commission.

It is for this reason that such emphasis is placed in the principles and guidelines on establishing good accountability, setting clear objectives and avoiding conflicts of interest or mission drift.

Further help and resources for Business as Mission in YWAM

There is a Business With a Mission (BWAM) Circle in YWAM that networks YWAMers involved in BAM and provides supporting resources and training. This Circle regularly convenes BWAM related events and has developed useful documents and resources. The BWAM Circle is also developing regional networks for BAM in YWAM. Alongside the BWAM Circle, is the Centre for Economic Development of the University of the Nations, under which training courses are being created for those called to the business sphere.

The BWAM website contains many supporting resources, including:

- [Business With A Mission Practice in YWAM - Statement & Guidance](#) (1 page overview)
- [BWAM Purpose, Values & Fruitful Practices](#)
- [Guidelines for establishing an MOU](#)
- [Legal and Structural Checklist for BAM in YWAM](#)
- [Other teaching resources on Business as Mission for YWAMers](#)

www.businesswithamission.net

Contact the BWAM Circle at: info@businesswithamission.net

In addition the Business as Mission Resource Website has been developed by a YWAM team that serves the Business as Mission movement globally. This more general website contains many other stories, articles, resources, links etc. on the concept and practice of BAM: **businessasmission.com**

See below for guidelines on doing other kinds of business as a YWAMer.

C: YWAM Staff and Teams Engaging in Other Kinds of Business

Frequently YWAM staff want to enter into business for other reasons, often to provide a source of income or as a side-line/accompaniment to other typical ministry activities for that YWAMer or team. This is distinct from business as mission, where the primary ministry happens both within and through the business. **For guidelines on BUSINESS AS MISSION please refer to the sections A & B above.**

YWAM has distinct guidelines about other types of business activities, as follows:

i. Areas where YWAMers or YWAM entities can be involved in business:

- a. Sales from items related to our ministry: books, t-shirts, souvenirs, CDs, speaking honorariums, royalties, etc.
- b. Income from schools and seminars.
- c. Passive income from property rentals, stock market, etc.
- d. Receiving an income from part-time employment. Responsibilities and guidelines should be determined locally for part-time YWAMers (on issues such as housing allocation, time allowed for outside employment/income generation etc.)
- e. Taking a job or using a profession to gain entry to a people where traditional missionaries cannot go or where a recognized role is needed (sometimes known as ‘tentmaking’).
- f. Using YWAM property and buildings to reach out to the Body of Christ and the surrounding community, such as renting out facilities, running courses, renting unused land or properties.

ii. Principles for involvement in business:

Note: YWAMers may be given some initial time off to set up income-generation structures so as to be able to return to work full-time or part-time with YWAM.

- a. All business activities must be fully legal according to the laws of the land, including registering with the proper authorities, paying taxes and all social charges, and respecting environmental, work-week and work condition laws.
- b. Land or other resources donated to YWAM or purchased by YWAM needs to be legally documented, and no hidden or under-the-table payments or tax avoidance schemes can be tolerated.
- c. Leases on YWAM properties should be short and should not block development of YWAM properties for ministry. These kinds of activities should not be so visible that they lead to YWAM being seen as a business or as a cluster of businesses.
- d. Leaders especially should avoid any appearance of conflict of interest in areas of business, such as renting their own properties or vehicles back to YWAM.
- e. Funds raised in YWAM's name for ministry or designated for other purposes should not be used for business without the express consent of the donor.
- f. If a small business that began under the auspices of the YWAM legal entity goes over the monetary threshold allowed for business activities conducted under a not-for-profit entity, it should be spun off into a separate legal entity. This should have a for-profit status and the appropriate taxes should be paid. (Check the threshold allowed by law in each nation).

iii. Areas where YWAMers or YWAM entities CANNOT be involved in business:

- a. Using any YWAM-owned property as security or collateral for a business venture.
- b. YWAM leaders or board members allowing their names to be used as guarantors for any non-YWAM bank loans.
- c. Using students or foreign staff in business ventures if it is against the law in the local situation or without the appropriate visa.
- d. Setting up a fake or shell company in order to gain entry with a business visa when there is no real business activity.
- e. Any business involved in shady areas of legality, including fraud, pyramid schemes, counterfeit merchandise, illegal goods etc.
- f. Running a for-profit business unrelated to YWAM's ministry to provide the exclusive source of income for that YWAMer or entity.