

Business as Mission vs. Business for Income Generation

Business as Mission is a ministry strategy that is totally distinct from the strategy of using business for generating income for missions.

Business AS Mission – is a strategy for ministering to people and communities, the primary aim is direct impact for the Kingdom of God through relationship and service, the business is the ministry.

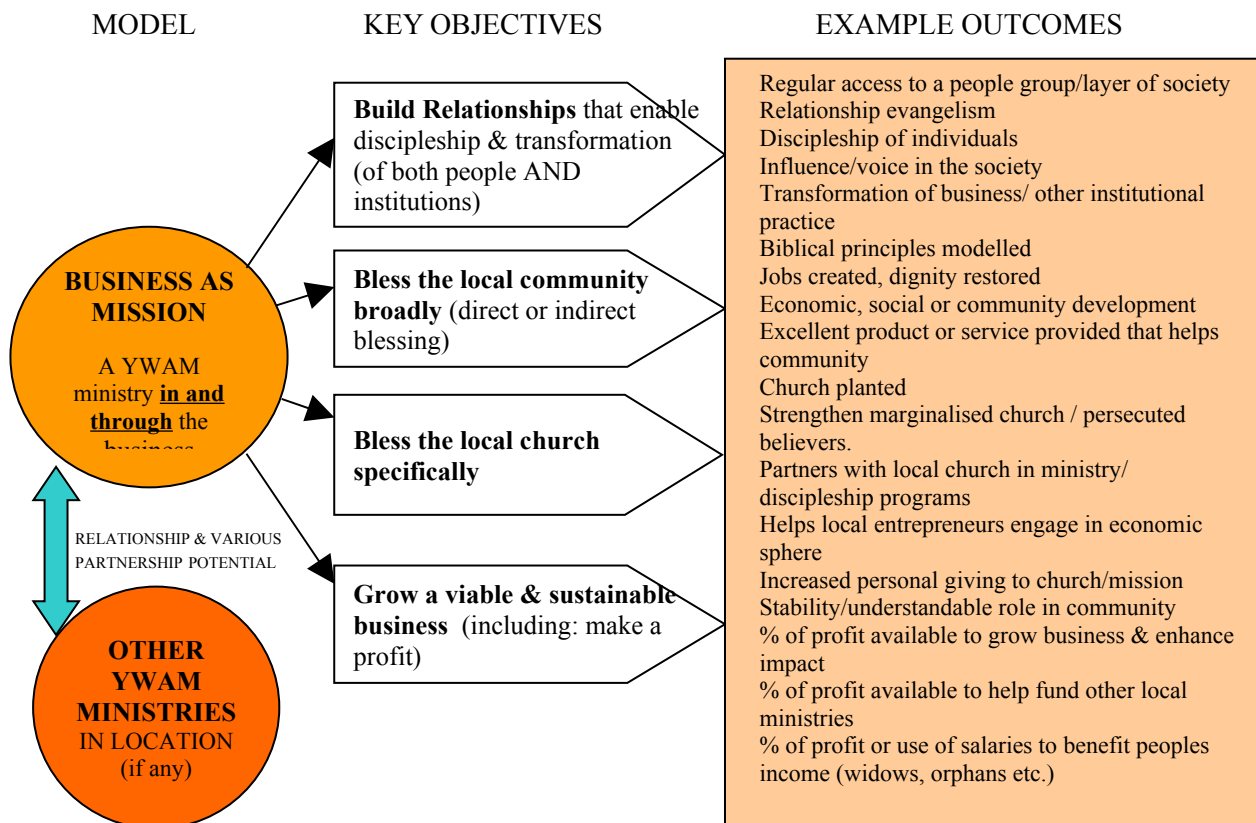
Business for Income Generation, sometimes called **Business FOR Mission** – is a strategy for generating finances to support other kinds of ministry, the primary aim is indirect impact for the Kingdom of God through providing funding to a frontline ministry.

Both are valid and much needed strategies in the Kingdom of God – however they are distinctive in their core motivation, main objectives and expected outcomes.

Business as Mission

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 through a viable and sustainable business which has Kingdom of God values, purpose, perspective and impact.

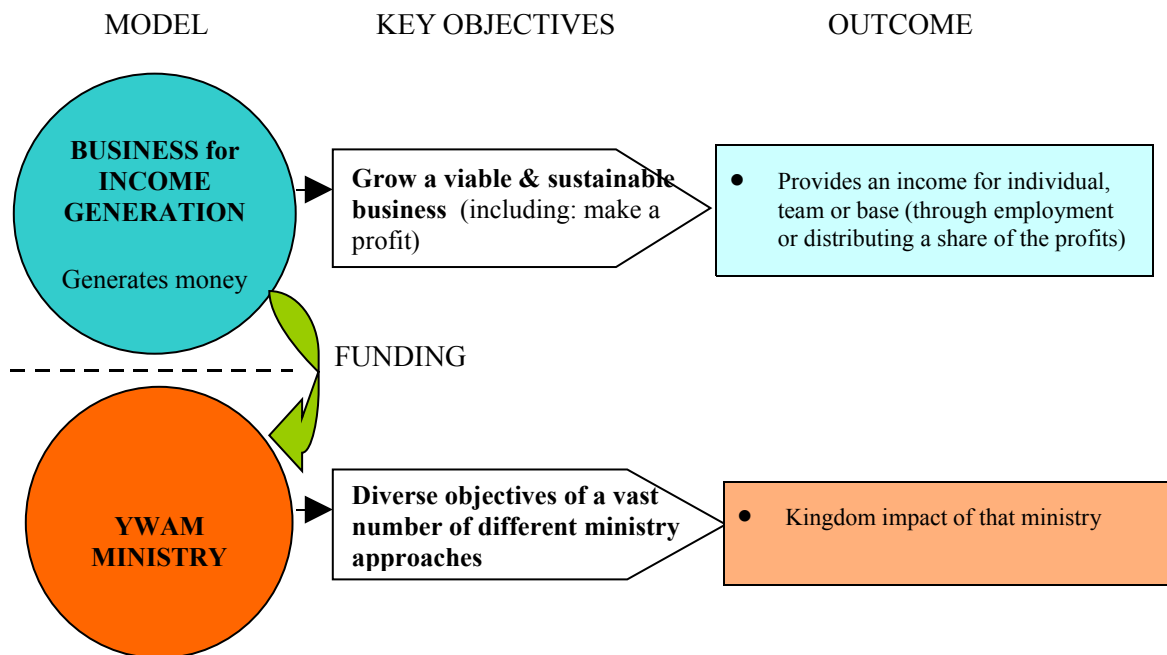
In YWAM business as mission is considered an avenue of missionary service that has the potential to accelerate the completion of the Great Commission. YWAMers can pursue their primary ministry calling through starting, joining or partnering with a business, or equipping others to start businesses.



Business for Income Generation

Business for income generation/mission is where profits from business are donated to fund missions and ministries or a business is started primarily to provide an income for an individual, team or community involved in missionary work.

In YWAM small-scale business (or employment) can be used as a way of providing part of the income required to enable a YWAM staff member, team or base to function in their ministry. Guidelines should be set locally about time allowed for outside employment/income generation – but it should not overtake and prevent fulfilment of the primary ministry.



Why make a distinction?

In YWAM we have made a deliberate distinction between these two strategies because we want YWAM staff to be clear about whether they are pursuing business because it is the strategy of choice to fulfil their ministry goals or because it is a strategy to generate funds.

This is important because one of our Foundational Values is that YWAMers give themselves, their time and service to God through YWAM without expecting payment. Depending on God and his people for financial provision through relationship based support is a key value that God has given YWAM and holds many blessings and benefits.

This value does not rule out creative ways of using business (or employment) to provide some income for an individual or team. There have always been diverse ways of receiving income throughout the history of YWAM, for example: honorariums, book sales, income from property rentals, stock, interest on capital, pension income, part-time employment, selling handicrafts and other small-scale business activities.

However, a principle behind the value is that YWAMers do not enter into ministry primarily motivated by the prospect of financial remuneration (payment). In other words, a YWAMer makes a sacrificial commitment, and does not expect to get paid a salary from YWAM in return for doing their core YWAM ministry.

This means that a YWAMer could engage in business or employment part-time to help them generate some support to do their usual ministry. But in these cases, if the business or the income begins to significantly distract the YWAMer from their YWAM ministry, then the purpose of it is defeated.

However, in the case of business as mission, involvement in a business IS the fulltime ministry. Therefore, we must take greater care to avoid the following:

- i. That potential income is the primary motivation and driver for a YWAMer to be involved in that ministry.
- ii. The danger of the YWAM team evolving an employer-employee dynamic within the team (which is a normal part of business culture but not YWAM culture).

It is for these and other reasons that the principles for business as mission in YWAM include the following statement:

j. YWAM values building relationship based support networks and encourages YWAM staff to actively build prayer and financial support teams. We do not encourage salaries to be paid to YWAMers.

Each business will be different, and will be capitalised and structured in different ways -practices will therefore vary. However, each practice should be evaluated in the light of the principles set out for BAM which exist to help YWAMers avoid conflicts of interest, relationship difficulties and the erosion of the mission force.

These considerations are particularly marked for YWAM as we seek to integrate ministry and business goals and thus YWAM and business culture and practices. This may lead us to slightly different practices in terms of recruiting, employment and salaries in our business as mission initiatives than is usual in business.

Mixed Motivations

Although there is a clear distinction between Business as Mission and Business for Income Generation in terms of motivation, objectives and outcomes – we have found in practice that some businesses started by YWAMers mix these two strategies together.

For example: A business is started by a YWAM team to directly enable ministry to an unreached community as the teams primary ministry outlet. However, at the same time the business employs some indigenous YWAMers specifically to help provide some of their income and uses some of the profits to help fund other YWAM ministries in the location.

Another example: A business is started on the side of a YWAM ministry to help provide an income for the team and various team members tend to the business part-time. As they engage in the business, the YWAMers realise it is opening up new doors to minister into the community and a ministry grows out of the business that was originally intended to only generate funds.

In such cases, these guidelines may be useful:

1. Try to establish the primary motivation of the business. If YWAM staff are spending a significant amount of time involved in the business because it is a way for them to directly fulfil their ministry goals, then that business should follow the principles for Business as Mission in YWAM. If the main motivation is really the income from the business despite some secondary ministry opportunities, then involvement in the business and any income from it should not lessen the sacrificial commitment of YWAMers to their primary ministries.
2. Recognise that all viable and sustainable businesses should aim to be profitable, therefore decisions about the distribution of income or profits will also be part of business as mission. Therefore in a BAM ministry income or profits may be used to materially benefit other missionaries or ministries. However, this is secondary or just one outcome among many expected ministry outcomes and not the primary driver of the business.
3. Recognise that the same business may be the primary ministry outlet (business as mission) for some YWAMers, whilst involving other YWAMers part-time, providing some financial benefit to them (business for income generation) whilst they continue with their main YWAM ministry. In this case, to avoid conflicts of interest and the potential for abuse of authority, the leader of their main YWAM ministry focus should differ from the leader of the 'business as mission' ministry.

For further help, please contact: bam@oval.com or visit www.businessasmission.com.