

## SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

### Why Start a Business?

*Dorothy M. Tuma © February 2013*

The answer to the question “Why did you start a business?” will vary from one individual to the next. No matter what however, no one goes into business to incur losses. That alone, makes it imperative that whatever business you hope to launch meets a market need. In other words, people should be willing to pay your price for the goods or services you plan to provide.

With Uganda’s youth unemployment at 22.3 percent, a large number of youth are considering starting a business just to earn a living. The good news is that in a country like Uganda, there are so many things that have not yet been introduced, that one does not actually have to invent something new. One can simply introduce something that is currently not available here but available elsewhere, or find a new way to do something already being done here. The opportunities are countless.

In addition to making money, there are a host of other benefits to be derived from starting a business including those listed below.

**Autonomy:** If you are tired of being told how to do your job, by starting a business you get to be in charge. You make all the decisions and bear all the consequences too. Julius’ employer adamantly refused to implement any of his recommendations so when his contract expired, Julius started Mountain Gorilla Coffee Tours, Kisoro. As CEO, he now gets to successfully implement all the ideas his former employer would not listen to.

**Get paid what you are worth:** It is not uncommon for people with the right technical skills, expertise, networks and strong job performance to feel underappreciated and underpaid. Using those assets to start a business could be the means by which such individuals finally earn what they believe they are worth. They get to see and enjoy the undiluted fruits of their labour without interference.

**Pursue your passion:** If you suffer through each day at the office impatiently looking forward to getting home to do the things your family and friends compliment you for – the mobile telephone applications you develop, the dishes you create from your own original recipes, the music you compose or your jewellery designs; starting a business along those lines lets you make a living by doing what you truly love.

**Make a difference:** Some people are motivated by the opportunity to make an impact. Vantage Communication Group was born out of Grace’s frustration with service levels in Uganda and her desire to expose Uganda to the excellent service she had experienced elsewhere. In another field, Victoria Seeds Ltd. has significantly changed the lives of over 1,000 partner farmers.

Starting a successful business is incredibly rewarding yet challenging too. Hard work, long hours and financial instability feature strongly. Recognize therefore, that you will not become rich overnight. Have an alternative income source and create a supportive network. If you firmly believe in your business idea, you will outlast those who do not.