

Module Content and Topics

Generating Business Idea

Indicative study duration: 8 hrs

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Learning outcomes and evaluation criteria

<u>Learning outcomes</u>	<u>Evaluation criteria</u>
By the end of this lesson/module, learners will be able to: • Identify common problems, needs, or gaps in their local community that could serve as a basis for a business idea. • Explain the relationship between solving a real-world problem and developing a viable business idea. • Generate multiple potential business ideas using simple creativity tools such as brainstorming and visual aids (e.g., Venn diagrams, problem-solution mapping). • Collaborate effectively in small groups to develop and present a basic business idea based on a given local context. • Evaluate their own skills, interests, and resources in connection with possible business opportunities. • Present a basic business idea clearly and logically, demonstrating an understanding of the need it addresses and how it could function.	• Identifies community needs: Observes and articulates real-world problems or gaps within the local community. • Connects problem to business idea: Demonstrates understanding of how addressing a need can create a meaningful business opportunity. • Generates ideas using creativity tools: Applies brainstorming or visual techniques to develop a range of innovative ideas. • Collaborates in group work: Actively contributes to team effort and co-develops a contextually relevant business idea. • Self-assesses entrepreneurial fit: Reflects on personal competencies and aligns them with the proposed business concept. • Presents business idea effectively: Communicates the business concept clearly, linking it to the problem and showing how it works.

Introduction to generating business idea

As a teacher, I emphasize that generating a business idea is the cornerstone of entrepreneurship education. Without an idea, no business can be initiated. For learners—particularly those in vocational training—it is crucial to recognize the problems and unmet needs within their own communities. By doing so, they begin to develop a sense of initiative and creativity, which are essential entrepreneurial skills. This topic also encourages learners to think independently and seek opportunities where others may only see challenges.(UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2021)



Suggested activities and exercises

Group discussion:

I initiate a conversation by asking learners: “*What problems or needs do you see in your community?*” For example: lack of clean water, limited access to products, poor transportation, or youth unemployment. These serve as starting points for idea generation.

Venn diagram exercise:

I guide students to draw three overlapping circles labelled:

- *What people need*
- *What I can do*
- *What could be sold*

Where these three circles intersect, we identify a potential business idea.

Brainstorming sessions:

In small groups, learners generate as many ideas as possible within five minutes, without criticism or judgment. This promotes creative thinking and group collaboration. (Osborn, 1953; Michalko, 2006)

Visual prompts:

Use images of local microbusinesses (e.g., food vendors, bike repair, solar charging stations) to spark ideas and discussions on how these businesses may have originated.

Activity: “What could we sell here?”

- Learners are divided into small groups.
- Each group is assigned a setting (e.g., school, market, bus stop, village square).
- They brainstorm what products or services could be offered in that location.
- Each group presents their idea to the class, explaining the need it addresses.

Worksheet: problem → solution → business idea

I use a structured worksheet to help learners think step by step. Here's an example format:

Community problem	Possible polution	Business idea
People have nowhere to charge phones	Create a solar-powered charging station	Phone charging service for a small fee

(IDEO.org, 2015)

Local context and examples

I incorporate local examples by encouraging learners to observe and interview small business owners in their area. Many individuals in Tanzania are already engaged in informal entrepreneurship—selling food, tailoring, or providing transport services. These examples help learners understand that business ideas can start small and grow gradually. Hearing the origin stories of these businesses can be both relatable and inspiring. (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010)

Futher reading and references

Osterwalder, A. & Pigneur, Y. (2010). *Business model generation*. Wiley.

Michalko, M. (2006). *Thinkertoys: A handbook of creative-thinking techniques*. Ten speed press

IDEO.org. (2015). *The field guide to human-centered design*. IDEO

UNESCO-UNEVOC. (2021). *Entrepreneurship education in Africa: a key to unlocking youth potential*

Osborn, A.F. (1953). *Applied imagination: principles and procedures of creative problem-solving*. Charles Scribner's sons.

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