

International Small Business Day

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This Saturday 27th June is **International Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Day**, recognising the vital role played by MSMEs or small businesses across the globe. Not just in emerging nations, but in towns and cities in every country, even yours. From an artisanal baker in a small Yorkshire village to a tailor in a shack on the edge of Nairobi; a sustainable farmer in Peru to a handicraft artist in India, these businesses are the lifeblood of every community. Though small businesses may seem like an unlikely topic for an International Day, in fact we should be celebrating these companies

and the people behind them, especially now.

The majority of money spent with such businesses stays within the local economy and most will have local supply chains. They are also far more likely to employ locally and from sections of the community that may sometimes struggle to find work, like those living in poverty or with less education opportunities or people facing discrimination through their racial or cultural background or a disability. So, as well as having a huge economic impact they are also a great leveller and force for equality across society.

In developing nations especially, small businesses play a huge part in poverty alleviation, female empowerment and community development, being a driver of income generation and employment in regional areas.

Many of CDV Global's partner NGOs work in the area of micro-finance and small enterprise creation, offering funding, training and ongoing support to small businesses and community led co-operatives.

As an actively female led organisation supporting female empowerment in the region, the results of targeting our small business training towards women's groups and young families is often best shown by the resulting self-confidence and independence of the women in the communities, which acts a great motivator for others.

Mana Pandey, Programme Coordinator for Nepal's Partnership for New Life:

The word "empowerment" is often used as a catchall benefit of small businesses, but it is a scalable term that has different outcomes for different people. For most the ability generate income for their family giving them peace of mind and liberation from extreme poverty is all they needed, yet others have taken the confidence and experience afforded them through managing their own business much further.

Many take their new skills and give back to the community by providing training and creating self-help groups, thus generating new opportunities from within the community itself.

Many successful new entrepreneurs actively look to expand their operation in order to create new employment opportunities for others in the community.

...such opportunities lead to an economically self-reliant community and significantly decrease inter and intra country migration.

The economic, social and cultural benefits of finding work locally for the young, the educated and the talented among the community, so they don't have to seek for work outside of the region, are huge and would most likely not exist were it not for successful small enterprises.

Other examples of the cyclical success of small business creation are easy to find:

Many of the business owners have since continued their education and training beyond the launch of their small business with some seeking a career in politics in order to help create a better path for their communities.

Ravi. H, Founder & Secretary of SADHANA, Karnataka, India

There are a number of examples of a family being able, through the income provided by their small business, to pay for their daughter's education. The daughter, in turn, returned to the community to start their own business. Such an example becomes an "eye catcher" motivating others to seek skills-development and establish small businesses leading eventually to greater gender equality, community leadership and a more equitable society.

Mahantesh .A.Agasimundin, Managing Director Bijapur Integrated Rural Development Society (BIRDS) Karnataka, India

As we hear, the positive impacts these operations make on a communal level are significant, yet often there are further benefits that are not that obvious.

The positive environmental effects are often overlooked yet can be hugely beneficial. Increased opportunities for income generation often leads to a fall in poaching, whether for food or sale in the illegal wildlife trade. Small rural agriculture enterprises also lean towards more ecologically sound practices and often champion sustainable farming techniques. While some communities even take stewardship of their local habitats, protecting and managing them or creating wildlife sanctuaries and habitat regeneration schemes funded by tourism.

Small local businesses may seem like a strange thing to celebrate, but they really do deserve more attention for the positive influence they have within a community. So next time you head out and have a choice about where you shop, why not consider shopping locally?



We would like to offer our thanks to our NGO Partners [PNL](#), [DFN](#), [SADHANA](#) and [BIRDS](#) for their input. They are four among many of our partners who have programmes creating and supporting small businesses in a number of sectors from farming and textiles through to food & beverage and hospitality. To increase the reach and effectiveness of these programmes the NGOs have identified further areas where training would be beneficial. If you or your company would be interested in [creating and delivering a bespoke training programme](#) for such an NGO, please [get in touch](#).

You can also read more about PNL, [here](#).

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