



# Building a National Kingdom Business Culture Through Integrated Discipleship and Entrepreneurship for the Youth: Lessons From Rwanda

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Richard L Miller

Patrice Habinshuti

*Regent University Center for Entrepreneurship*

*Roundtable: Kingdom Business*

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Christian research has revealed that one effective and sustainable way to transform people and nations is through *business from the heart* or *kingdom business*. Koshal (2008) noted that kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy – (a) profitability and sustainability and (b) job creation and income generation – and affirm that such businesses help make both an economic, as well as a spiritual, impact in developing countries. As Rae (2005) affirmed, exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training is believed to inculcate kingdom business principles (Miller, 2012). This paper outlines the process of building a national kingdom business culture in developing countries through equipping youth to run kingdom businesses by integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship in high school teaching. The process has been developed by the authors and tested in Rwanda for over a decade (2012-2022).

*Keywords:* kingdom business, entrepreneurship, discipleship, youth, Rwanda

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## Introduction

Research has confirmed that business is the engine of economic growth in developed and developing economies to achieve socioeconomic transformation and accelerated development (Losccoco and Leicht, 1993). However, business owners fail to achieve this

goal of effectively transforming societies mostly because, as Koshal (2008) noted, they fall in love with their own ideas, products, and services and forget their customers, employees, and communities around them. This is due to the fact that, mostly, the world has centered all business science around profitability, which leads to more of the entrepreneurs *doing business from the stomach* or *doing business from the head* with less or no emphasis on sustainability and ethics.

Blackaby (2001) affirmed it is imperative for Christians to give a gentle, clear, and effective witness to Jesus Christ in the marketplace; as Jesus made it abundantly clear that every Christian is salt and light. Therefore, each Christian can and should have a real and dynamic influence on others. Certainly, one sure way to effectively and sustainably transform people and nations is through equipping its youth for spiritual transformation and for doing business from the heart or kingdom business.

Tsague (n.d.) defined *kingdom business* as

God's business, managed God's way, by God's steward, for God's purposes in the world; where business operations are managed by the guidelines of the King which are found in the Bible. Moreover, the products and services must be approved by the King; thus there should be no sin products, and the business itself must be a platform for ministry where we demonstrate our salt and light to a dark and dying world. And of course, it must be profitable since the King is concerned about the proper stewardship of His resources. However, the profit is not for us; the operators of a kingdom business, but for the King; the owner of the business, so we must use the profits as He directs.

Koshal (2008) added that kingdom businesses are businesses started by Christians that pursue a multiple strategy – (a) profitability and sustainability and (b) job creation and income generation – and affirm that such businesses help make both an economic, as well as a spiritual, impact in developing countries.

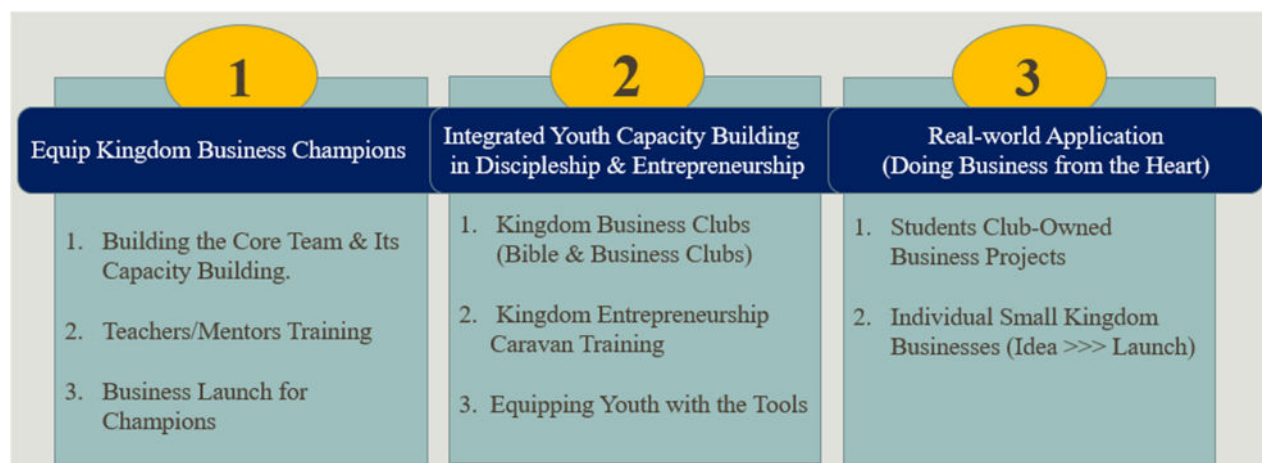
## Methods

Rae (2005) affirmed that exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training are believed to be key inculcating kingdom business principles into entrepreneurs (Miller, 2012). Over the last 10 years, the researchers (i.e., Richard L. Miller and the team in Rwanda led by Patrice Habinshuti) embarked on a journey of building a national kingdom business culture in Rwanda through nurturing the next generation of Christian leaders to becoming who the Creator intended them to be and preparing them to run kingdom businesses. This was achieved by defining and testing a new approach through a decade-long capacity-building experimentation in the African nation of Rwanda. The presentation outlines the process of building a national kingdom

business culture in developing countries through equipping youth to run kingdom businesses by integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship in high school teaching. The three-step youth empowerment process outlined herein has been tested in Rwanda for over a decade (2012-2022).

**Figure 1**

*The Experimentation Process Used by Researchers*



## Findings: Achieved Milestones in the Rwanda Experiment

Table 1: Step 1: Equip Kingdom Business Champions

| Component   | Description                          | Achievements from the Rwanda experiment  |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Team Building & Capacity Building for Leading Champions | Self-efficacy training               | Three leading champions trained in 2012  |
|   | Entrepreneurship training            | Four leading leaders took Regent's 16-week training in 2012-2014   |
|   | Tools for transformation             | Four leading champions took this training in 2012  |
|   | Advanced formal training             | One leader achieving Regent MBA (2015-2017)  |
| Equipping Teachers & Mentors                            | Teacher training in kingdom business | Teachers who are mentoring entrepreneurship clubs received an intensive training while on holiday in 2013; 20 teachers attended and were further |

| Component                 | Description  | Achievements from the Rwanda experiment                                     |
|---------------------------|--|---|
|                           |  | appointed to mentor entrepreneurship clubs in their respective high schools |
| Champions Business Launch | Trained leading champions equipped to start their own kingdom businesses | Each of the 4 Leading Champions started their own businesses (2013-2015)    |

Table 2: Step 2 Integrated Youth Capacity Building in Discipleship &amp; Entrepreneurship

| Component                         | Description  | Achievements in Rwanda  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Bible & Business Clubs            | Bible and Business Clubs are school-based, student-led clubs and coached by mentors who are chosen among the most passionate and practicing born-again teachers of entrepreneurship at the respective schools. | Twenty clubs in 16 districts across Rwanda were launched between (2012-2015)  |
| Kingdom Entrepreneurship Caravans | A two-part caravan training delivered nationwide across high schools and the universities to focusing on “Who I Am” in Christ and “What I do” as a business.   | Over 3,000 youth in 20 active high school-based Bible and Business Clubs and two universities were trained across Rwanda (2013-2018)    |
| Equipping Youth With the Tools.   | Every student participating in the Integrated Discipleship and Entrepreneurship Training receives a <i>Bible</i> and the <i>Course Booklet</i> .   | Over 3,000 youth in Rwandan high schools who attended caravan trainings received a booklet and a <i>Bible</i> in Kinyarwanda or English |

Table 3: Integrated Youth Capacity Building in Discipleship & Entrepreneurship Training *Content*

| Content            | Description  |
|--------------------|--|
| Who I am in Christ | <p>Review self-efficacy</p> <p>Tools for Transformation (construction metaphor with three building blocks: heart, soul, and mind)</p> <p>What is a transform</p> <p>Writing and assimilating transforms</p>    |
| Resources I have   | <p>Personal resources/attributes</p> <p>Who do I know</p> <p>Financial resources</p>   |
| What I Do          | <p>First principle: “Find a need and fill it”</p> <p>Second principle: Compare need with my resources</p> <p>Write a business plan</p> <p>Set goals</p> <p>Start the business</p> <p>Periodically evaluate</p> |

Table 4: STEP 3: Real-World Application (Doing Business From the Heart)

| Activity                               | Description   | Achievements in Rwanda                               |
|--|---|--|
| Students’ Club-Owned Business Projects | Club members required to carry out business projects that serve as entrepreneurship labs for student members to learn from. | Twenty clubs successfully started business projects. |

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|                     |  |   |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Individual Projects | Nurtured through Idea Generation through the Bible & Business Clubs (As part of the regular action plan) and through the Business Idea Competitions. | <p>79% intent to start a business (survey after training)</p> <p>100% consider the program to have brought new knowledge on the connection between the <i>Bible</i> and business</p> <p>100% “like” the approach of “doing business from the heart” and are interested becoming kingdom entrepreneurs</p> |
|---------------------|--|---|

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*Note. Actual business start-up statistics from program participants were not measured, as business start-up is an ongoing process after the training.*

## Conclusion

Exposure to entrepreneurship education and training delivers orientations to the cognitive features and skills necessary for initiating and managing entrepreneurial ventures. In the same way, efficient prior discipleship and transformation training are believed to inculcate kingdom business principles. Building a national kingdom business culture requires youth to be equipped with integrated discipleship and entrepreneurship knowledge and applied skills for them to know *Who I am in Christ* as people created with specific abilities and a unique purpose on Earth as assigned by the Creator and then *What I Do* enlightens them about and launches them into kingdom business.

From its experimentation in Rwanda, the developed approach outlined in this material has shown a huge potential to enable the creation of a nationwide kingdom entrepreneurship culture when rolled out in high schools and universities (colleges). The training manual used has been designed by Richard L. Miller, and its full content has been validated through a nationwide experimentation.

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## About the Authors

Richard L Miller, DSL, is a mentor and volunteer consultant with Regent Center for Entrepreneurship, which seeks to transform people and nations through business. Being a U.S. Army Veteran, Miller worked on various leadership, business consulting, and engineering projects with the U.S. Army and beyond. He holds a Masters’ degree in Electrical Engineering from Oklahoma State University and a Doctorate of Strategic Leadership from Regent University. Miller developed the curriculum on integrating discipleship and entrepreneurship for the youth, which has been tested, validated, and implemented in Rwandan schools by the Schools Entrepreneurship Network.

You can contact him by e-mail: [richmil777@aol.com](mailto:richmil777@aol.com).

Patrice Habinshuti, Ph.D. Scholar, is a business development practitioner focusing on kingdom business. He is the director of the Regent University-certified Business Development Center in Kigali, Rwanda, and a founder of the Schools Entrepreneurship Network, an organization that has been inculcating a culture of ethical entrepreneurship among the youth, especially in Rwandan high schools, using the model described in this article, under the mentorship of Richard Miller for over 10 years. Habinshuti holds an MBA in Entrepreneurship from Regent University and is completing his Doctor of Philosophy in Business Management at Ganpat University (India). You can contact him by email: [habipat@mail.regent.edu](mailto:habipat@mail.regent.edu)

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