

Building Bridges Project

Building bridges: evidence-based dialogue through participatory research was a collaborative project between Trias East Africa and the Tanzania National Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA) and implemented in close contact with the government. The project's primary goals were to improve the business environment and enhance the participation of Micro Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and private sector in general in the implementation of the Five-Year Development Plan 2 (FYDP II). It aimed at fostering informed private sector engagement in constructive policy dialogues.

To achieve these objectives, the project focused on strengthening the research capacity of TCCIA head office and its 10 regional offices (Dar es salaam, Dodoma, Arusha, Mwanza, Mara, Shinyanga, Mbeya, Songwe, Mtwara and Kigoma) and facilitating dialogues between policymakers and MSMEs through Regional Business Councils. The research covered various aspects of business, allowing for evidence-based recommendations to support industrial clusters and promote economic growth and industrialization. It also sought to make the FYDP II more inclusive by involving private sector organizations and gathering input from at least 3,000 businesses across the ten regions in Tanzania. The data collected through surveys and research was then analyzed and shared with relevant stakeholders, including government ministries, research institutions, and member-based associations, to inform better policy decisions and implementation strategies.

The study, which involved over 3,000 registered MSMEs, was carried out using digital data collection tools. The project aimed at fostering collaboration and information flow between TCCIA and Tanzanian research institutions, leading to high-quality reports shared with various stakeholders. By using the research findings to enhance transparency and accountability, the project encouraged regulatory authorities to build trust and credibility with private sector stakeholders, which could lead to stronger economic growth and responsible business behavior in Tanzania. Despite its limitations, the study advocated for further research to validate and address any identified shortcomings in its findings.