



# Our Local Stories.

Business meets Development.  
Investing in inclusive development in  
Tanzania and the EAC region.





**Mrs. Anne Hahn**

Country Director  
GIZ Tanzania & EAC

**DEAR PARTNERS,  
COLLEAGUES, AND  
FRIENDS**

As we enter the final quarter of 2025, I hope you all enjoyed quality time with your loved ones during the holiday break and are energized for a successful finish to the year. The GIZ Tanzania/EAC team experienced a wonderful boost in September with the exciting visit from Ms. Petra Warnecke, the Director General of the Africa Department, and Dr. Matthias Rompel, the Head of the Regional Division for East Africa and the Horn of Africa at headquarters. Their visit included intense travel to various duty stations and provided opportunities for sharing insights and engaging in fruitful discussions with our team and important stakeholders. You can find some impressions shared by Dr. Rompel in this newsletter.

As you know, discussions within the development community often focus on the declining funding for development work in many parts of the world. At the same time, we are witnessing an increase in global challenges, often at an accelerating rate. GIZ, as an international agency and service provider, is addressing these simultaneous challenges with professionalism and confidence. We believe that, in partnership with our long-standing allies and new collaborations, we can continue to create visible and meaningful impacts for the people of Tanzania and the East African Community. In this newsletter, we share local stories that demonstrate the positive changes brought about by our collaborative efforts and trustworthy partnerships.

You will also find here a report on the recently inaugurated exchange format “Collaborate4Development - Business Breakfast”: As joint initiative by the German Embassy, the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHK), and GIZ businesses and development partners came together to share knowledge, identify opportunities, and develop solutions that promote both economic success and sustainable impact. In an open dialogue private sector representatives and development experts exchanged ideas while exploring opportunities for future collaborations . GIZ looks forward to building on this momentum and enhancing cooperation between the private sector and development organizations .

Please let me also share, an insight to our company: We at GIZ are currently intensively working worldwide for the transformation of our digital systems. Our goal is to implement customized and up-to-date systems that will not only enhance our technical capabilities but also improve how we collaborate through standardized processes. We aim to continuously grow as a reliable and efficient partner in international cooperation. The go-live date for new systems is scheduled for 01 January 2026, thus we are entering the “hot phase”. Please keep your fingers crossed for us as we approach this crucial final stage before the system switchover.

I hope you enjoy reading our newsletter, and I look forward to connecting in person at our next opportunity.

Asante sana, thank you.



## BUSINESS MEETS DEVELOPMENT: LAUNCH OF THE COLLABORATE4DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS BREAKFAST SERIES



On Friday, 3 October 2025, the German Embassy in Dar es Salaam, German Technical Cooperation (GIZ) in Tanzania/EAC, the German Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHK) in Tanzania, came together to host the inaugural Collaborate4Development – Business Breakfast. GIZ, AHK, and the German Embassy have joined forces to create a space where development cooperation and business interests intersect.

Through the Collaborate4Development platform, businesses and development partners can share knowledge, identify opportunities, and co-create solutions that drive both economic success and sustainable impact.

Held at the German Ambassador's residence, the event brought together a select group of business leaders, development experts, and institutional partners for an interactive morning of exchange and collaboration under the theme “Partnering for Impact:

Where Business Meets Development. The Business Breakfast opened with welcoming remarks from Maximilian Müller (German Embassy), Anne Hahn (GIZ Tanzania/EAC), and Christian Engels (AHK Tanzania), . A real-life partnership between GIZ's WE4D programme and Shell showcased how cooperation between development and business can deliver

practical, scalable results. Participants then joined interactive discussions at four thematic networking tables covering:

- Business Meets Development – What's in it for us?
- From Ideas to Cooperation
- Sustainable Market Entry & Local Partnerships
- Skilled Workforce – Bridging the Skills Gap

These sessions encouraged open dialogue, idea sharing, and exploration of future collaboration opportunities. GIZ looks forward to building on this momentum and deepening collaboration between development cooperation and the private sector. The launch of the jointly organised Business Breakfast: Collaborate4Development marks an important milestone in fostering strategic partnerships that combine innovation, expertise, and shared purpose. Together, we aim to turn dialogue into action—creating sustainable business opportunities that contribute to Tanzania's inclusive economic growth.

*Authored by Sina Henke and Leslie Leslie*



# INVESTING IN BIODIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN TANZANIA.

*Matthias Rompel*  
*Director East Africa and Horn of Africa*

Last week I was in Tanzania and toured the portfolio of GIZ Tanzania and EAC together with Petra Warnecke. We had a very dense schedule, visited different places and spoke with partners and colleagues to assess the impact of our work. As German Cooperation we work in Tanzania in partnership with government and other stakeholders, on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and European Commission, and together with other partners of #TeamEurope. Why is German Cooperation active in Tanzania? Because Tanzania is a growing market and a stable anchor in East Africa, with interest in furthering cooperation with Europa. Our work in Tanzania is focused on pre-

serving global public goods (as biodiversity and mitigating the impacts of climate change), and on inclusive development – for the benefit of people and nature.



“ East Africa can be seen as the most integrated region in Africa, Trade-related integration is more advanced than in other regional economic communities in Africa. ”

“ German Cooperation fully aligns with the six primary areas of the EAC strategy, and its objectives are aimed at improving regional trade, health, and global goods, utilizing potential of youth and their digital economy to co-create impacts for East Africans. And of course, to improve trade between EAC and the European market. ”

“ Through our work, about 500 SMEs and cooperatives with over 4,200 participants from the region were trained on EU market requirements. Through support to the Incubator for Integration and Development (IIDEA) in East Africa more than 58,000 people benefited directly through increased income, improved trading conditions and better awareness of their rights, with 90,000 persons participating IIDEA events. ”

“ It was so encouraging how we work with private sector companies to abandon inefficient flood irrigation practices and adopt sprinklers and systems which are completely carbon-neutral, since they are powered with the power of gravity only. ”





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It was interesting to me to talk to officials in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) and learn about their efforts to use geo-information systems to track and follow-up on human-wildlife conflict, and to empower communities on their livelihoods and security.

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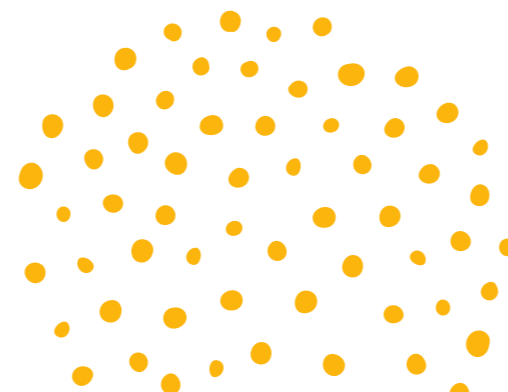
At the One Stop Center at Mwananyamala Hospital we met a team of dedicated professionals collaborating with victims of gender-based violence. The Government of Tanzania has established One Stop Centers (OSC) to improve the response to gender-based violence by providing medical, psychosocial and police services under one roof. Our team supports these national efforts by strengthening the capacity of staff working in OSCs, improving coordination between key actors, and piloting the provision of legal aid services as a complimentary support within selected centers.

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Women in AI Meetup Session, bringing together women working across Tanzania's artificial intelligence #AI ecosystem, from innovators to researchers to policy influencers as part of Digital Transformation Centre Tanzania.

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Global gateway: strengthening green infrastructure and integrated corridor development in Africa. We visited the brand-new Magufuli train station in Dar Es Salaam opened in **2024** and took a train to Dodoma was another highlight of our journey.

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The total investment volume of the section between Dar es Salaam and Dodoma was USD **2.8 billion**. Germany contributed **USD 140 million** via KfW IPEX-Bank. On behalf of German government, GIZ is supporting this strategic infrastructure development through its “Green Infrastructure for Intra-African Trade (Support to PIDA).

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We are also working hard to gear our work to co-operation with private sector both in Tanzania, and in Europe and Germany. Reducing trade barriers and connecting the regional markets of East Africa (**344 million people**) and Europe (**450 million people**) is for the benefit of the population in both regions.

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VIEW REPORT HERE

[Here https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/supporting-biodiversity-inclusive-development-tanzania-rompel-hnjte?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_ios&utm\\_campaign=share\\_via&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad\\_flagship3\\_company\\_admin%3B-caaPjq37SwSLbEW3g07B%2FQ%3D%3D](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/supporting-biodiversity-inclusive-development-tanzania-rompel-hnjte?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_ios&utm_campaign=share_via&lipi=urn%3Ali%3Apage%3Ad_flagship3_company_admin%3B-caaPjq37SwSLbEW3g07B%2FQ%3D%3D)

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# THE GOLDEN MINUTE: BREATHING LIFE INTO NEWBORN HEALTH IN TANGA



Within the first 60 seconds of life, a baby must begin to breathe, or face potentially lifethreatening complications. This brief period, the “Golden Minute,” can determine whether a newborn makes a healthy transition to life outside the womb. If breathing doesn’t begin spontaneously, neonatal resuscitation becomes essential, and skilled healthcare workers play a vital role in safeguarding the baby’s health and future.

The GIZ Health Programme, on behalf of the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the President’s Office – Regional Administration and Local Government, and local partners, is working to strengthen neonatal care in the Tanga Region. This is achieved through the capacity development of healthcare workers on-site mentorship and support, and the provision of essential equipment to supported health facilities.

A component of this effort is the introduction of skills labs: dedicated training spaces within health facilities equipped with simulation models and learning tools. These labs allow health care workers to practice essential procedures, such as neonatal resuscitation, in a safe environment. The hands-on, continuous training helps build confidence and competence, ensuring staff are ready to act quickly and ef-

fectively in real emergencies. Follow-up to the lab practice is provided during quarterly GIZ-supported mentorship visits. More than 350 health care workers have benefited from neonatal care mentoring.

Effective neonatal care continues even after resuscitation. Health care workers must continue to monitor the baby closely, ensuring stable body temperature, providing oxygen therapy, or stabilizing the airways of babies using continuous positive airway pressure. To enable health facilities to provide this care, GIZ has distributed equipment worth 975 million TZS to 20 health facilities across Tanga region and trained health care workers on the use of the equipment.

By making these investments, GIZ strengthens the foundation for sustainable improvements in newborn care and helps to ensure that every newborn not only survives the first moments of life but also thrives.





## EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES TO WITHSTAND HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT THROUGH SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Did you know that effective mitigation of human – wildlife conflict (HWC) goes hand in hand with improving the livelihoods of the communities living in HWC hotspot areas? In this issue you will learn how financial freedom helps communities become more resilient in the face of HWC.

As part of the joined project with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism to mitigate HWC, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), provided a grant to CARE International for strengthening communities' livelihoods through establishing Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs).

### Finding Hope Amid Human-Wildlife Conflict

After losing two community members in a single day due to elephant encounter and facing frequent crops damage, Machemba village, in Tunduru district was left traumatized. But with the formation of Upendo “Love” they found hope. Through saving with VSLA, 19 members of the group took some loans and launched income generating activities such as fish farming and poultry.



Their journey proves that even in the face of loss, communities can heal, adapt, and thrive when collectively equipped with the right knowledge, skills, and tools. “Before I joined VSLA, I relied on subsistence farming only. Once crops were destroyed, I had neither alternatives for survival nor access to affordable loans. But now, through the group, I can borrow money to grow my small business and contribute to our shared fish project,” says Athumani Ausi, a project beneficiary, Machemba village. VSLAs helps Athumani to compensate the losses caused by repeated crop damage.

Since the introduction VSLAs in 30 villages across the Namtumbo, Liwale and Tunduru districts, more than 2,500 people including 1,715 women are enjoying their individual savings and access to affordable loans, just like Athumani Ausi.





## INNOVATION, TRADE, INTERNAL MARKET: WHY AFRICA AND EUROPE SHOULD FORM A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

A guest article by Veronica M Nduva, EAC Secretary General Tagesspiegel Newspaper - Germany

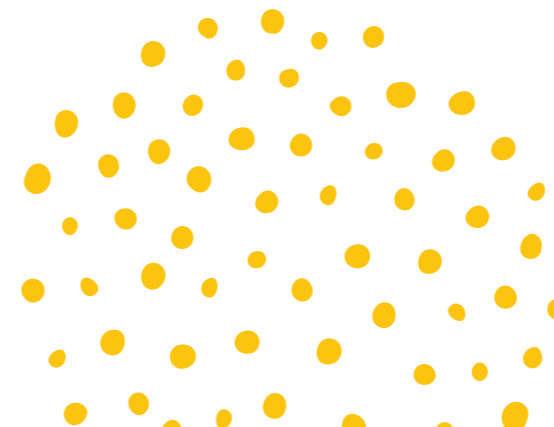
African states are working together more intensively, and if Europe recognises and engages with this potential, it could benefit all. A plea for more togetherness. The East African Community (EAC), founded 25 years ago with eight partner countries and about **330 million** inhabitants, exemplifies this. Like the EU, the EAC has built a common internal market, coordinated policies, recognised educational qualifications, eased travel, and laid the foundations for future integration. The region is achieving high economic growth, widespread digital payments, and African-led solutions for peace and security.

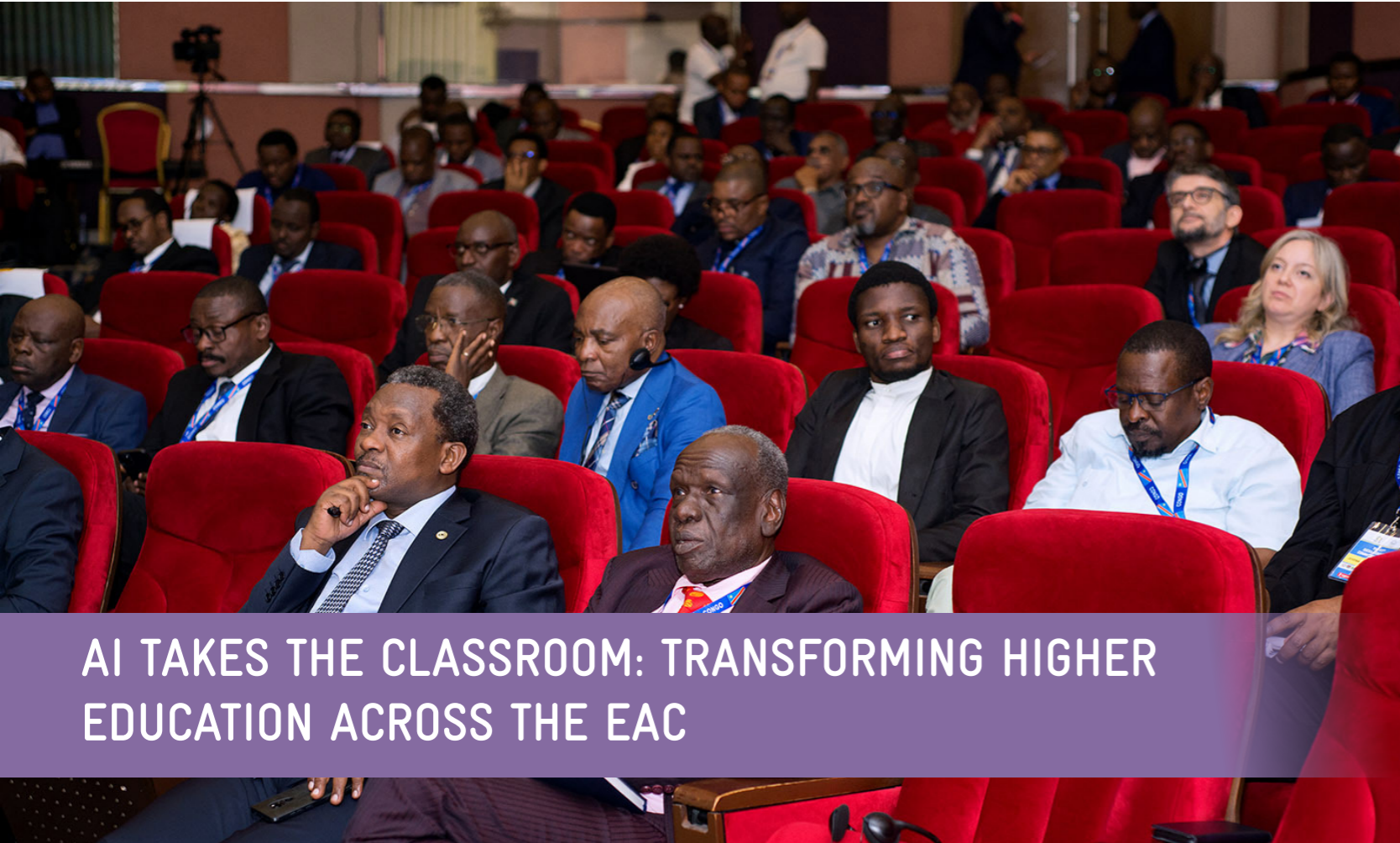
Despite these parallels with Europe, “we do not exploit the potential of our cooperation.” While the EAC attracts over **\$10 billion** in foreign direct investment annually, most comes from Asia or the Arab world, with Europe ranking fourth, after China, the UAE, and India. Growing interest in Africa, combined with calls for fairer trade and new customs policies, creates momentum for a deeper partnership. This could be achieved by taking the relationship to a new level—as a strategic alliance. For such a partnership to succeed, Europe and Africa must work together to develop solutions. East Africa’s geopolitical position, straddling West and East, offers an opportunity to diversify trade relations and reduce dependencies.

Veronica M. Nduva, Secretary-General of the EAC, emphasises that this momentum must be shaped. Europe and Africa should work together to prove that democracy and the rule of law can also be economically successful. This includes fair trade agreements and economic arrangements giving East African companies real access to European markets, while protecting local industries.

African perspectives and innovations, particularly in digitalisation, renewable energy, and AI, offer valuable insights and opportunities for Europe. This is reflected in Kenya and Tanzania, where telecom companies rank among Africa’s most valuable, and female tech leaders have gained international recognition, showcasing

the region’s innovative and youth-driven talent. Nduva calls for a strategic alliance combining Europe’s investment power and technology with East Africa’s young talent and market size. This partnership can build shared knowledge, foster long-term growth, and shape a sustainable future for both continents. **Read more of this article here>>** <https://www.tagesspiegel.de/internationales/innovationen-handel-binnenmarkt-warum-afrika-und-europa-eine-strategische-allianz-eingehen-sollten-13771534.html>





## AI TAKES THE CLASSROOM: TRANSFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION ACROSS THE EAC

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping global education, and East African universities are stepping up to ensure they keep pace. In Europe, AI has been firmly embedded in the EU's Digital Decade Vision, with significant investments in digital skills and a new AI Act requiring AI literacy in education. This positions AI competence as a core skill for the future.

In East Africa, universities are aligning with these global standards by adopting AI responsibly and preparing graduates to drive innovation in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, and regional integration. This commitment was at the centre of the 16th Annual Conference of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), held in July 2025, where ministers, university leaders, and development partners adopted resolutions to accelerate AI integration and digital transformation.



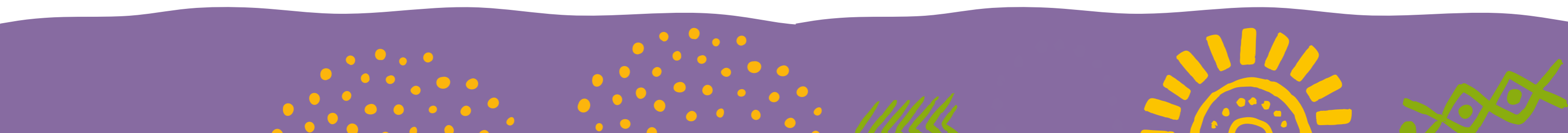
Acting as a launchpad for the EAC AI Alliance project, a BMZ-supported initiative designed to coordinate regional efforts, the conference announced various strategic partnerships. These include, UNESCO aligning its Campus Africa initiatives with the Alliance, providing policy support, capacity building, and regional engagement through platforms like the Umoja Hackathon; IBM co-designing micro-credentials and mentoring universities through its Skills Build platform; Strathmore University advancing AI research in healthcare and agriculture, fostering peer-to-peer learning; and NM-AIST providing technical training through its Centre of Excellence in ICT and Cybersecurity.

The Alliance outlined a transformative strategy through the establishment of a Regional Centre of Excellence on AI. Priorities include harmonising curricula, embedding ethical and inclu-

sive AI practices, piloting transdisciplinary programmes, and creating a regional framework for micro-credentials to support lifelong learning.



Looking ahead, GIZ and IUCEA will drive implementation across three areas: cross-border AI research, practice-based AI curricula, and harmonised, gender-responsive AI policies. With varying levels of infrastructure and strategy across countries, harmonisation is essential. The conference called on universities to join the Alliance's network to strengthen expertise, foster industry partnerships, and ensure that AI adoption in East Africa is ethical, inclusive, and sustainable. [Read more of this article here >>](https://www.eacgermany.org/news/ai-takes-the-classroom-transforming-higher-education-across-the-eac)





## FROM MARGINS TO THE CENTRE: YOUNG PEOPLE DRIVING THE EAC YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Youth voices in East Africa are moving from the margins to the centre of decision-making. This was evident during the EAC Youth Dialogue with East African Legislators on the EAC Youth Policy Recommendations, where aspirations of young people were actively integrated into governance, policy frameworks, and regional engagement..

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The two-day forum, held on 11 to 12 August 2025 at the EAC Secretariat in Arusha, Tanzania, was convened by the East African Youth Network (EAYN) in partnership with stakeholders, including GIZ through the EU co-funded LIFTED project. It brought together Members of Parliament from EAC Partner States, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), and over 100 youth representatives from across the region.

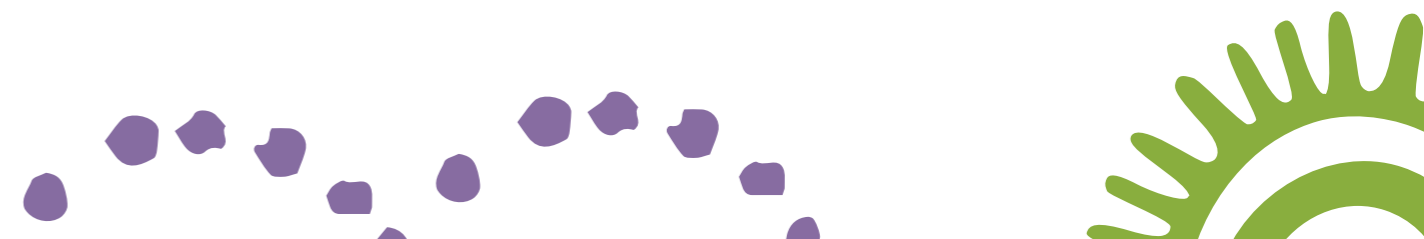
Under the theme “From Consultation to Action: Legislative Pathways and Popularisation Strategies for the EAC Youth Policy 2025–2030”, the dialogue dou-

bled as a pre-commemoration of International Youth Day. Discussions centred on legislative engagement, regional collaboration, and strategies to ensure effective implementation and accountability of the new youth policy.

Speaking on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Speaker of EALA, Hon. Kacwamba Ansar, EALA Member from Tanzania, underscored youth participation as key to regional economic transformation. He reaffirmed EALA’s commitment to finalising the EAC Youth National Council Bill, operationalising the East African Legislative Youth Caucus, and advancing the Youth Policy. He

also thanked partners, such as EAC–GIZ, for their role in reviewing and validating the policy.

The national consultations conducted across all Partner States provided concrete recommendations to strengthen the responsiveness and inclusivity of the draft EAC Youth Policy 2025–2030. These inputs now serve as a blueprint for legislative and programmatic action at both national and regional levels. **Read more of this article here:** <https://www.eacgermany.org/news/milestone-in-the-eac-youth-policy-development-process-as-youth-dialogue-with-eac-legislators-giz>





## TURNING THE TIDE: NEW DATA FROM LAKE VICTORIA FUELS REGIONAL ACTION AND ECOSYSTEM THREATS

Lake Victoria supports over **40 million** people across East Africa with food, water, and livelihoods. Yet a new regional study shows growing pollution pressures that could threaten its sustainability.

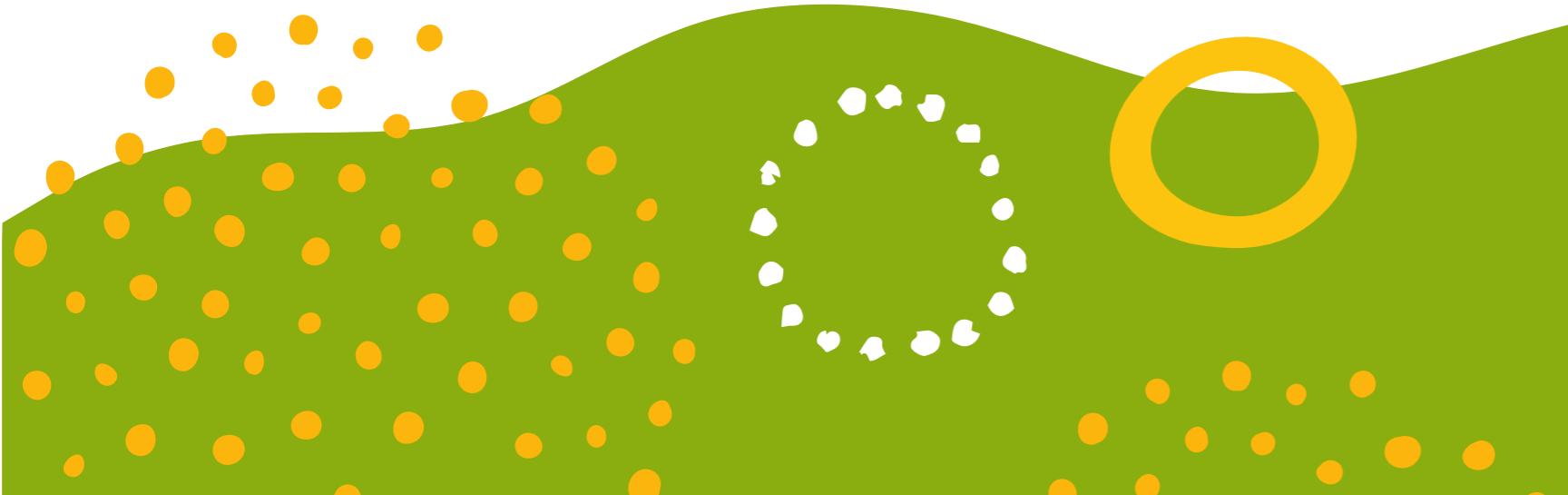
Between June and July 2025, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania jointly conducted a regional water quality sampling exercise, led by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) with support from GIZ under the EAC4Nature project. The data will feed into the upcoming State of the Basin Report, providing a detailed picture of the lake's health.

The survey covered 44 sampling stations across nine sites, including Mwanza, Bukoba, Entebbe, Jinja, Kisumu, and Homa Bay. Tanzania hosted the highest number of stations (17), followed by Uganda (15) and Kenya (11).



Scientists measured nutrient levels such as nitrogen and phosphorus, as well as pH, temperature, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen. Selected sites were tested for heavy metals including mercury, arsenic, and lead, while phytoplankton monitoring examined algal activity and the risks of harmful blooms. Invasive species such as water hyacinths were also assessed. The initiative represents one of the most comprehensive assessments of Lake Victoria's water quality in recent years. Its findings will provide governments and regional bodies with credible, science-based ev-

idence to guide conservation and policymaking. LVBC Executive Secretary Dr Masinde Bwire highlighted its importance: "The results of this exercise will be crucial to the development and sustainability of projects and programs within the larger Lake Victoria Basin." **Read more of this article** [here:https://www.eacgermany.org/news/turning-the-tide-new-data-from-lake-victoria-fuels-regional-action-on-pollution-and-ecosystem-threats-giz](https://www.eacgermany.org/news/turning-the-tide-new-data-from-lake-victoria-fuels-regional-action-on-pollution-and-ecosystem-threats-giz)





# ENHANCING FOOD SAFETY IN EAST AFRICA – REGIONAL EXPERTS VALIDATE THE STUDY ON QUALITY OF FOOD INSPECTIONS IN EAC

Foodborne diseases from animal-sourced foods such as meat, fish, and milk pose significant risks to human health and economic productivity in East Africa. The World Health Organization estimates that over **91 million** people in Africa fall ill annually from foodborne diseases, with economic losses exceeding **USD 110 billion** in low- and middle-income countries.



From 26–27 March 2025, the EAC, supported by GIZ and BMZ, convened a regional expert workshop to improve food safety across Partner States. Experts from the EAC Secretariat, national health and standards agencies, WOA, FAO, and ILRI validated a study assessing inspections of commonly traded foods of animal origin. The study highlighted challenges including limited human resources, poor coordination between sectors, and insufficient infrastructure for detecting microbial hazards.

The study proposes an assessment matrix to evaluate inspection quality and microbial risk, providing a practical tool for EAC Partner States. Workshop Chair Mr. Benjamin Murkomen, Head of Division, Port Health Services, Kenya, stressed: “As animals and humans cross our borders, pathogens spread. Through safe food products, we can reduce infectious disease risks and enhance health and economic growth in East Africa.”

Participants recommended strengthening inspection capacities, harmonising guidelines, upgrading infrastructure, and delivering targeted training. Dr. Sam Okuthe of FAO emphasised a collaborative ap-

proach: “Ensuring food safety requires coordination across human and animal health, agriculture, and the environment, following a One Health approach.”



These measures, supported by the PanPrep project, aim to safeguard consumers and foster economic growth while reducing the burden of foodborne diseases in the region. **Read more of this article here:** <https://www.eacgermany.org/news/enhancing-food-safety-in-east-africa-regional-experts-validate-the-study-on-quality-of-food-inspections-in-eac-giz>





## BUILDING A PATH TO PEACE AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY: UGANDA'S COMMITMENT TO THE ATEKER RESOLUTIONS

The Karamojong communities in Uganda's Ateker region, who share cultural ties with counterparts in Kenya and South Sudan, remain at the centre of regional peacebuilding. In 2024, district and county leaders signed the Ateker Resolution, pledging to strengthen cultural ties, promote peaceful coexistence, and address local challenges through dialogue and traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms.

In East Africa, universities are aligning with these global standards by adopting AI responsibly and preparing graduates to drive innovation in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, and regional integration. This commitment was at the centre of the 16th Annual Conference of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), held in July

2025, where ministers, university leaders, and development partners adopted resolutions to accelerate AI integration and digital transformation

Building on the 2023 Peace Caravan and the 2024 Ateker Resolution, Uganda's Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) convened a technical meeting in Moroto in May 2025 with Ateker leaders. The meeting produced a comprehensive roadmap and draft action plans to guide Uganda's implementation of the resolutions and integrate them into national policy frameworks.



Dr Andrew Musiime, Commissioner for Political Affairs at MEACA, noted that the issues raised now feature prominently in the EAC Council of Ministers, with strategies under discussion to address the Ateker region's unique challenges.

EAC Secretariat representative Mr Leonard Ngeleja commended Uganda's commitment and urged community leaders, including those from the Turkana, Toposa, Didinga, and Karimojong communities, to remain engaged in open, honest dialogue to turn resolutions into tangible results. From the development partner side, GIZ reaffirmed its support, highlighting ongoing peacebuilding efforts under the African Union Border Programme, SCIDA, and the Civil Peace Service projects. These initiatives have equipped civil society with dispute res-

olution skills and supported pastoralist youth through rangeland management and job skills training along the Kenya-Uganda border. The process reflects a shared determination to transform commitments into action, advancing peace, unity, and livelihoods across the Ateker region. **Read more of this article here:** <https://www.eacgermany.org/news/building-a-path-to-peace-and-economic-prosperity-uganda-s-commitment-to-the-2024-ateker-resolutions>





# ENHANCING RESPONSIBLE FISHING PRACTICES AT THE KENYA-TANZANIA MARINE BORDER

Conflicts between fishers and marine law enforcement are a recurring challenge along the Kenya-Tanzania border, often triggered by unclear boundaries and limited awareness of conservation zones. To address this, in early August 2025 - the Kwale-Tanga Coast Transboundary Conservation and Sustainable Management of Coastal and Marine Biodiversity Project convened a 7-day workshop and border visit in Mkinga.

The training reached 136 fishers and 14 community leaders, building awareness on legal fishing zones, conservation areas, and the dangers of smuggling. Early results are promising, with participants expressing a renewed commitment to sustainable practices.

**Bakari Ally Mwanaiya, Chairperson of the Beach Management Unit (BMU) in Mwaboza Village, reinforced the value of community leadership:**



“It’s our responsibility in the BMU to guide our community toward sustainable and legal fishing practices.”

This training marks the start of a broader cross-border collaboration. Upcoming activities will be held on the Kenyan side, with mutual visits and joint exchanges planned to ensure both countries benefit equally. Such efforts aim to harmonize marine governance, reduce misunderstandings, and strengthen trust between communities and enforcement agencies. For fisheries officers, the hands-on approach proved particularly effective. “Learning by seeing the actual boundaries strengthens understanding and respect for regulations,” noted Ezra Katete, Fisheries Officer from Mkinga District Council.

Looking ahead, a joint exchange platform is being developed to promote dialogue, problem-solving, and coordinated planning which is vital for the long-term success of the Tanga-Kwale Transboundary Conservation Area (TBCA). This project is funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN) through the International Climate Initiative (IKI), with co-financing from the European Union (EU).





## BEYOND BORDERS: EXPANDING FINANCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH E-COMMERCE

By Catherine Hight, Edel Were, Diana Mutabazi, Fahari Marwa

In the evolving landscape of Africa's digital economy, cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) has emerged as a transformative force, particularly for rural women entrepreneurs. For women cross-border traders, many of whom engage in agriculture, CBEC and simplified trade procedures offer an opportunity to expand beyond local markets, boost their incomes, and create a financial footprint that can lead to a suite of financial products.

For Mwanama\*, a small-scale maize trader at the Isebania–Sirari border between Kenya and Tanzania, e-commerce has transformed how she does business. She began trading informally across the border by taking orders via phone from customers and delivering them locally using tuk-tuks (auto-rickshaws). As her customer base grew, she officially registered her business, enabling her to trade under the East Africa Community Customs Union Simplified Trade Regime (STR).

The regime is a special provision designed to ease cross-border trade by reducing paperwork and delays in clearing goods as well as offering no import duties in the destination country on consignments of goods below USD 2,000. The STR encourages

the formalization of informal cross-border trade, specifically for small-scale traders. Since her registration, Mwanama has also used reliable courier services to reach new markets across the border, as opposed to the informal couriers she previously relied on.

Despite the gains made, Mwanama still faces challenges in meeting the technical and phytosanitary requirements for selling maize, notably due to costly and duplicative certification processes. E-commerce efforts aim to find the optimal balance between building visibility and trust and avoiding scrutiny and tax exposure, among other trade barriers that remain a key tension for women like Mwanama. International cooperation plays a pivotal role in advancing CBEC in East Africa.

With support from Germany's development ministry and implemented by the German development agency GIZ, regional projects in the East African Community (EAC) aim to strengthen cross-border trade by harmonizing standards, improving access to finance, and enhancing digital capacities and awareness, among other essential skills for women traders. Informal cross-border trade can be both costly and risky for women. Many face frequent clashes. Frequent clashes with local authorities and the threat of having goods confiscated loom over informal trading. Conversely, formalizing trade can lead to shorter processing times, improved access to duty exemptions through simplified trade schemes, and greater protection from

harassment or extortion — particularly for women traders. These benefits help streamline business operations and reduce risk.

CBEC, with support from the EAC, also opens markets for small-scale traders. Platforms like Kili-moMart, an application that connects small-scale farmers in Uganda to regional markets, have enabled women cross-border traders to easily interact with customers, access real-time market information, and sell organic processed products (such as moringa, coffee, and cassava flour) online.

The World Bank is also supporting efforts to expand cross-border e-commerce in East Africa. In Somalia, a pilot is underway to assess how sim-

plified trade procedures can make it easier and cheaper for small traders to move low-value goods between Kenya and Somalia. Much of this trade — in livestock, rice, pasta, and other staples — already happens informally. Simplifying the rules can help bring more of it into the formal system, making trade safer and more profitable for small-scale traders. **Read more:** <https://www.cgap.org/blog/beyond-borders-expanding-financial-inclusion-through-e-commerce>



The 2025 edition of Karibu-Kilifair, East Africa's largest tourism expo, was held from 6–8 June at the Magereza Grounds in Arusha, Tanzania. The three-day event drew over 500 exhibitors from 15 countries, 1,000 international buyers, media, and industry leaders, positioning the region at the centre of global travel conversations.

For the East African Community (EAC), the expo was a key platform to showcase the unified regional tourism brand, “Visit East Africa – Feel the Vibe”, launched earlier this year at ITB Berlin. The brand brings together Partner States’ tourism boards, tour operators, hoteliers, and service providers to embrace multi-destination travel, increase visibility, and foster sustainable investment. Supported through the BMZ and EU co-financed project LIFTED via GIZ, the initiative is also strengthening stakeholder capacity through digital platforms, and cross-border collaboration.

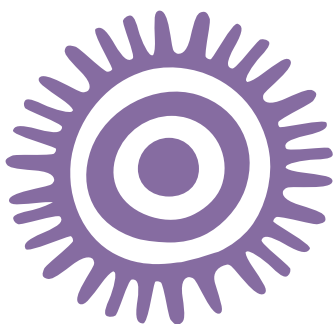
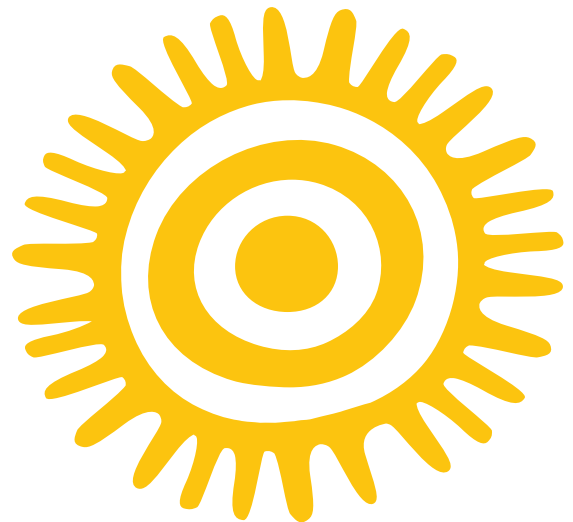
Opening the event, Hon. Doto Biteko, Deputy Prime Minister of Tanzania, highlighted the sector's impact: tourism contributes 17.2% to Tanzania's GDP and 25% of exports. In 2024, earnings reached **USD 3.9 billion** with over **5.3 million** tourists, **3.2 million** of them domestic. He urged Tanzanians to continue exploring their country while welcoming growing international interest.

Speaking on behalf of the EAC Secretariat, the representative emphasised that the brand goes beyond a slogan, describing it as “a call for strategic partnership, innova-

tion, and integration,” and underlined the expo's importance in fostering cross-border business collaborations.

German Ambassador to Tanzania, H.E. Thomas Terstegen, reflected on more than 25 years of EAC-German cooperation and stressed tourism's potential. “Joint approaches, including single visas for safari tourists, will make East Africa stronger globally. Visit East Africa – Feel the Vibe, I can assure you I do,” he affirmed.

By uniting the region's diverse cultures, landscapes, and wildlife under one brand, East Africa is positioning itself as a high-quality, integrated destination that balances global competitiveness with conservation and community-led tourism. **Read more of this article here:** <https://www.eacgermany.org/news/eac-promote-the-region-as-a-single-tourism-destination-at-the-karibu-kili-fair-2025-expo-giz>





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