



3RD JOINT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

17th – 18th September 2024

**Embracing Technology and Innovation for catalyzing a
Vibrant Startup Ecosystem in Zanzibar**

**Prepared by: Zanzibar Research Centre for Socio-economic
and Policy Analysis**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 3rd Joint Annual Conference, organized by the Zanzibar Research Centre for Socio-Economic and Policy Analysis (ZRCPP), the Embassy of the Netherlands, UNDP, and USAID through Feed the Future Project, convened over 300 key stakeholders at Madinat Al Bahar Hotel Mbweni Zanzibar over two days to discuss the future of Zanzibar's startup ecosystem, innovation and technology.

The two-day conference served as a platform to disseminate findings of “Zanzibar Startup Ecosystem Scoping Study”, highlighting the essential role of startups in driving economic growth in Zanzibar. His Excellency Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council officiated the conference, and launched the study. Hon. Hemed Suleiman Abdullah, Second Vice President of Zanzibar, presided over the closing ceremony on the following day. The event also featured key figures such as HE Dr. Saada Mkuya, Minister of the President's Office for Finance and Planning, Mr. Sharif Ali, Minister of the State President's Office Labour, Economic and Investment along with various principal secretaries, government officials, UNDP Resident Representative Shigeki Komatsubara, Netherlands Ambassador Wiebe de Boer, and representatives from USAID. Their participation underscored a collective commitment to fostering a supportive environment for startups in Zanzibar.

During the conference, several key themes emerged, highlighting opportunities for building a vibrant Zanzibar's startup ecosystem through innovation and technology. One of the central discussions focused on the utilization of technology to accelerate the growth potential of the startup ecosystem, particularly in tourism, blue economy, health, education, agriculture and fintech. These sectors were identified as ripe for development, with participants advocating for a startup-friendly legal framework, such as a Startup Policy or Startup Act. Such a framework would streamline regulatory processes, offer clear guidelines, and create incentives for investment, fostering innovation and job creation. A remaining issue is what ministry from the government side should lead this emerging but important industry, which is multi-sectoral by nature.

Another important topic was the need for building on a shared definition “Zanzibar Startup Ecosystem Scoping Study” describing what constitutes a "startup" within the local context. This would help align stakeholders, including policymakers, investors, and entrepreneurs, ensuring that targeted support and resources are channeled where they are most needed. Strong industry linkages and capacity-building initiatives tailored to Zanzibar's specific context were also emphasized as critical to equipping startups with the necessary skills and networks to succeed.

Learning from best practices based on comparable economies was another highlight of the conference. Tunisia's comprehensive Startup Act, for instance, which includes government-backed funding, mentorship programs, and streamlined regulations, could be used as a model for Zanzibar to consider. However, participants underscored the importance of adapting such practices to Zanzibar's unique cultural and economic landscape.

The alignment of efforts between development partners and the needs of the startup ecosystem was also seen as essential. Ensuring that support programs are responsive to actual startup demands would enhance the effectiveness of these interventions and optimize resource use. Given that Tanzania's economy may double by 2030, the private sector will play a critical role in driving this transformation, particularly through technology, innovation and groundbreaking star-ups.

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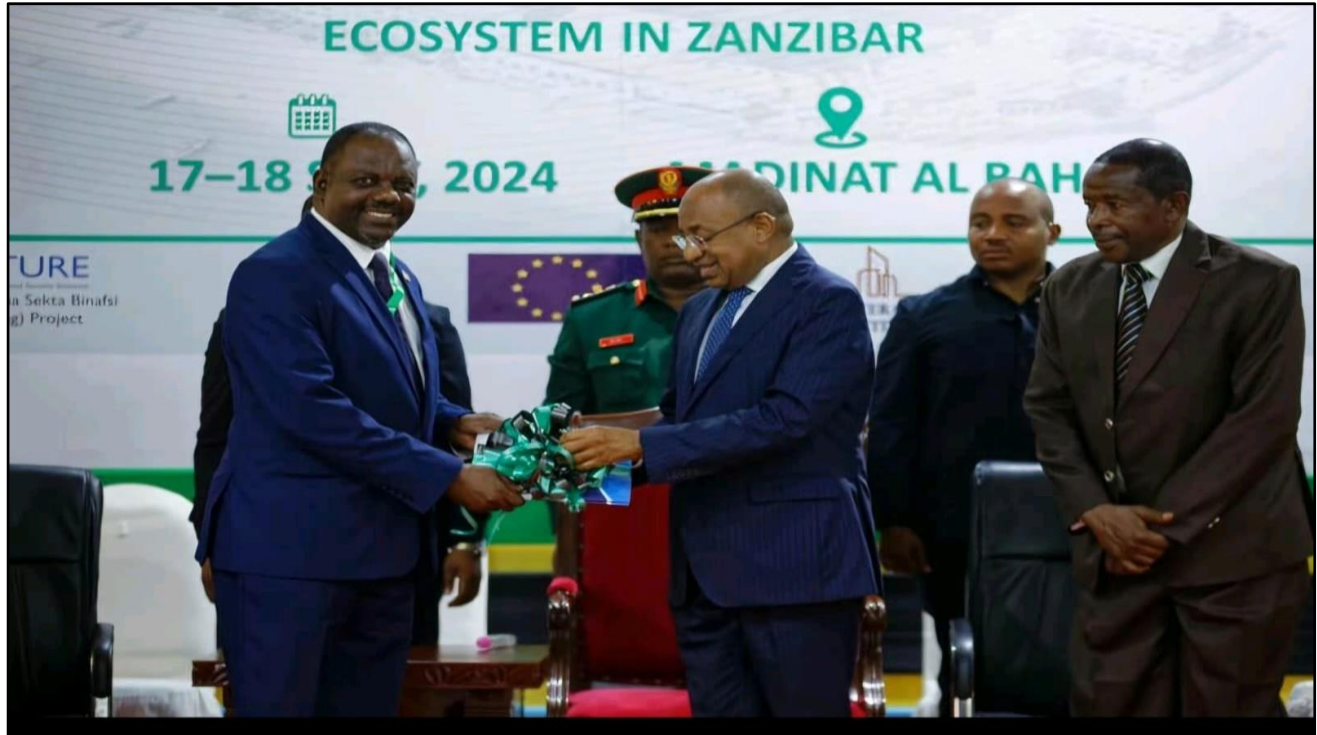


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OPENING CEREMONY



In his opening speech at the 3rd Joint Annual Conference with the theme “Embracing Technology and Innovation for catalyzing a Vibrant Startup Ecosystem in Zanzibar”, the President of Zanzibar and Chairman of Revolutionary Council, Dr. Hussein Mwinyi, emphasized the importance of well-prepared discussions and actionable recommendations to enhance the development of Zanzibar startup ecosystem. He highlighted the vital role of youth in innovative entrepreneurship, emphasizing that fostering their engagement is essential for boosting the region's economic growth.

The President called for active participation in discussions, encouraging attendees to provide valuable feedback. He acknowledged the support from the Netherlands Embassy, UNDP and USAID in funding this initiative which is seen as pivotal for preparing a more enabling environment using the baseline study launched during the event called “Zanzibar Startup Ecosystem Scoping Study”

Furthermore, His Excellency Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi expressed the government’s commitment and readiness to provide support and willingness to collaborate with private sectors in creating conducive environment for the development of Startup ecosystem. He directed that key deliberations from the conference should be tabled timely to the relevant entities for actions in order to foster innovation and help young entrepreneurs develop profitable businesses that benefit the broader community and nation as a whole.

DAY ONE: 17th September 2024

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Topic: *Practical Steps for fueling Zanzibar's Startups Ecosystem*

Keynote Speaker: Wiebe De Boer - Ambassador of the Netherlands



Highlights

The presentation broadly explained why the Embassy of Netherlands has committed to support the conduct of this Scoping study on Startup ecosystem in Zanzibar. As they believe the growth of this sector is the key in creating economic prosperity in the Country. It also highlighted the importance of findings and recommendations included in the report in building a vibrant ecosystem in Zanzibar. These include developing a startup policy framework, enhancing public-private partnerships, improving digital infrastructure, and establishing a startup fund. Key initiatives should focus on building a strong foundation for innovation and entrepreneurship cultures. These actions will support startups, reduce regulatory barriers, offer mentorship and market access, improve tech infrastructure, and provide funding for early-stage startups to encourage innovation and support young entrepreneurs in Zanzibar.

OPENING REMARKS

Speaker: Shigeki Komatsubara - Resident Representative UNDP



Highlights

Tanzania has officially transitioned from lower-middle-income to upper-middle-income status, reflecting its commitment to investing in infrastructure and developing local resources. It was pointed out that, according to the International Monetary Fund, Tanzania's economy is set to double in size between 2020 and 2030. As this growth unfolds, Tanzania is steadily catching up with its northern neighbor, Kenya. If this trend continues, it is foreseeable that Tanzania could overtake Kenya as the largest economy in East Africa within the next decade.

Zanzibar's economy is experiencing rapid growth, encouraged by a favorable business environment and a rising tourism sector. Currently, the economic exclusion zone encompasses nearly 25% of Tanzania, indicating significant potential for development. Zanzibar is well-positioned to harness opportunities in both the blue and green economies, thanks to its historical role as a crossroads of culture and trade. The region's peace and harmony will be crucial as it establishes itself as a gateway for economic growth. As Tanzania aims to maintain its middle-income status, the demand for diverse skills will increase. The private sector will play a vital role in driving this economic transformation, necessitating initiatives for workforce reskilling. Investing in future opportunities will be essential for fully realizing Zanzibar's exciting potential and supporting Tanzania's overall economic ascent.

PRESENTATION ONE

Topic: Key Findings of Zanzibar's Startups Ecosystem Scoping Study.

Speaker: Dr. Twahir M. Khalfan, Director of Research and Policy Analysis - ZRCP



Highlights

The Zanzibar Startup Ecosystem Scoping Study highlights the early but promising nature of the country's entrepreneurial landscape. Despite the limited number of established startups, sectors like tourism, agriculture, and technology show potential for growth. However, entrepreneurs often lack the capital, skills and market knowledge needed to scale their businesses. A definition of Startups in Zanzibar context was presented, and equally the recommendation for improving access to funding through venture capitalist, angel investors and other catalytic funding options were presented.

It was revealed that the startup ecosystem lacks crucial business support services like incubators and mentorship programs, limiting access to expert advice and networking opportunities. The study also points out deficiencies in digital infrastructure, which hinder startups' access to markets and digital solutions. Despite these challenges, the study recognizes the significant innovation potential among Zanzibar's youth who are very talented and competent. Realistic ways for addressing key issues like funding and infrastructure could fuel rapid ecosystem growth were presented. The crucial need to develop the policy and regulatory framework to address existing bottlenecks and lack of coordinated efforts was also well articulated.

Panel Discussion:

Moderator; Ivana Damjanov – Country Lead Tanzania, Inclusive Digital Economies, UNCDF

Panelists:

- John Mahundi – Presidential Delivery Bureau
- Khadija Sharif – Executive Director, MILELE Foundation
- Esther Wangoi – Head: Regulatory Affairs, Vodacom Tanzani
- Ikram Soragha – Chief Executive Officer, ZSA
- Joseph Manirakiza –Programme Manager, UNDP (Funguo Project)



Key Issues

- Startup Policy Framework:** Discussants argued for the creation of policy that support startups, including regulatory reforms and tax incentives, to attract investors and entrepreneurs which relate with Zanzibar environment.
- Zanzibar-Specific Startup Fund:** It was recommended to establish a public-private venture capital fund to provide early-stage financing for startups, bridging the existing funding gap.
- Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaboration between the government, private sector, and international organizations was recommended to provide better resources, mentorship, and market access for startups.
- Entrepreneurship Skills:** The introduction of entrepreneurship-focused education and training programs in schools and universities was suggested to nurture a generation of skilled entrepreneurs and innovators.
- Using the definition of startups in the context of Zanzibar was highly recommended with a broader perspective during the discussion session.

PRESENTATION TWO

Topic: Biostimulant as a new frontier for innovation in a billion-dollar seaweed industry – The case of Firdous Biotech Zanzibar.

Speaker: Tariq Ishmail – Founder, Firdous Biotech



Highlights

- Biostimulants are revolutionizing Zanzibar's seaweed industry, with Firdous Biotech leading the way in producing organic, sustainable products from local seaweed. By converting seaweed into biostimulant, Firdous Biotech is enhancing agricultural productivity, increasing yields, and promoting sustainable farming practices. Argued that, this innovative approach not only adds value to Zanzibar's seaweed but also reduces reliance on chemical fertilizers.
- The company's model demonstrates how small islands like Zanzibar can leverage their natural resources through innovation, creating new markets and improving livelihoods, especially for women involved in seaweed farming. The global demand for biostimulants in organic and regenerative agriculture further highlights the economic potential of this emerging industry, positioning biostimulants as a game-changer in the billion-dollar seaweed market.

Discussion: Q&A Session:

Moderator; Dr Maryam Ismail – ZRCP

Key Issues

Three main recommendations from the Q&A Session were:-

- i. **Investment in R&D:** Participants recommended increasing investment in R&D to explore more biostimulant applications and develop advanced formulations that maximize agricultural benefits, thereby expanding market potential.
- ii. **Scaling Production and Technology Transfer:** It was recommended that local seaweed farmers especially women in Zanzibar and businesses like Firdous Biotech should receive support in scaling up production. Technology transfer and modern farming techniques should be implemented to improve efficiency and ensure that seaweed-derived biostimulants can meet global standards.
- iii. **Strengthening Market Access and Partnerships:** The discussants urged strengthening market access through partnerships with international agricultural firms and distributors. This would open up export opportunities and position Zanzibar as a key player in the biostimulant industry, linking local production to global markets.

PRESENTATION THREE

Topic: The state of the Fintech Policy and Regulatory Environment in Tanzania.

Speaker: Kandyl Kotta – Policy and Research Specialist, UNCDF

Highlights

- The Fintech policy landscape in Tanzania is evolving to support the digital economy growth, with mobile payments like Tigo Pesa, Airtel Money and M-Pesa leading the sector. While regulations from the Bank of Tanzania offer a legal framework for Fintech players, there are gaps in promoting innovation, particularly for startups in Zanzibar.
- Startups in Zanzibar face challenges such as high compliance costs, complex registration procedures, and limited financial infrastructure access. The country-autonomous status adds complexity with overlapping regulations hindering startups' ability to scale. A more adapted regulatory approach that supports Fintech innovation, especially for emerging startups, is needed. This would allow for the development of disruptive technologies, like blockchain and digital banking, to meet Zanzibar's market needs, enhancing the startup ecosystem in the country.

Panel Discussion

Moderator; Dr Twahir M. Khalfan – ZRCP

Panelists;

- Fabian Kasole – Bank of Tanzania, Assistant Manager Directorate of Payment Systems
- Mihayo Wilmore – Vice President Strategy, AirPay
- Dr Muhsin Masoud – Former Managing Director, PBZ and Amana Bank
- Kheri Mbiro – Senior Partner, Breakthrough Attorneys

Key Issue

- i. **Simplify Regulatory Procedures:** The panel recommended streamlining registration and compliance procedures for Fintech startups to lower barriers to entry ensuring consumer protection, allowing them to innovate more easily within the Tanzanian market, especially in Zanzibar startups ecosystem by entering Fintech space.

- ii. **Regulatory Sandboxes:** Panelists emphasized the need for regulatory sandboxes where startups can test Fintech innovations without full regulatory compliance, enabling growth and experimentation without the fear of penalties, with the good support by the Government (RGoZ) to promote such conducive innovative environment towards startups.
- iii. **Promote Fintech-Specific Funding Mechanisms:** The creation of funding channels, such as grants or venture capital funds, was recommended to support the development of early-stage Fintech startups, particularly in underrepresented state like Zanzibar, specifically for underserved population to enhance economic growth via Fintech policy



PRESENTATION FOUR

Topic: Shaping Zanzibar Startups Ecosystem through Flexible Policy Framework: What can we learn from other African countries?

Speaker: Joseph Manirakiza- Programme Manager, UNDP through Funguo Tanzania

Highlights

Zanzibar can shape its startup ecosystem with a flexible policy framework, learning from successful models like in Rwanda, Kenya, and South Africa. These countries prioritize ease of doing business, innovation, and access to finance through adaptable regulations. Kenya's "Silicon Savannah" fosters Fintech innovation, Rwanda offers the Innovation Fund, and South Africa provides tax incentives and Fintech sandboxes. Zanzibar can benefit from simplified regulations, incentives for investors, and Public Private Partnerships to attract capital and expertise. Emphasizing digital infrastructure

and education will support startups in tech and tourism. By adopting such strategies, Zanzibar can nurture its thriving startup community for sustainable growth.

Panel discussion

Moderator; Mustafa Sharif- PSSM, USAID through Feed The Future Project, Private Sector Strengthening

Panelists;

- Dr Sarah Stephen –Senior Lecturer, Sussex University
- Rashid Rashid – Managing Director, Aatif Aquaponics Ltd
- Arafa Bakari – Founder, Asili Fertilizer



Key Issues

- Streamlined Business Registration:** Simplify the process for registering new businesses and obtaining licenses, reducing time and cost for startups to business.
- Strengthen Public-Private Partnerships:** Foster collaborations between the government, private sector, and international organizations; like Ghana has been done for making robust change in providing mentorship, funding, and market access to local startups.
- Enhancing community building:** Recommended for strong capacity building like Senegal has been done- promotes networking and collaboration among startups; by creating a strong entrepreneurial community via events platforms, workshops, conferences which positively make a room for interaction with professional entrepreneurs.
- Introducing specific Innovation Hubs:** Adoption of innovation hubs or tech parks that was similarly introduced in Tunisia which encourage startups Infrastructure, resources, and conducive environment for startups to thrive.

DAY TWO: 18th September, 2024

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Topic: How to turn dream into reality in Tanzania startups context?

Keynote Speaker: Edwin Bruno - Founder of Smart code



Highlights

- Edwin Bruno, CEO of Smart Code, stresses the importance of vision, resilience, and strategic execution in turning dreams into reality for Tanzanian startups. He believes aspiring entrepreneurs must focus on solving real-world problems, adapt to challenges like limited access to capital and infrastructure, and embrace failure as a learning opportunity.
- Bruno also emphasizes the value of building a strong support network with mentors, collaborators, and investors. Leveraging technology is crucial for innovation in sectors such as Fintech, agriculture, and e-commerce. He advocates for government support and regulatory reforms to create an enabling and robust environment for startups to thrive.
- By staying adaptable and growth-oriented, Tanzanian startups can make their entrepreneurial dreams a reality and boost the economy, which can be the same to Zanzibar if application Technology could be installed respectively.

PRESENTATION FIVE

Topic: The High-Tech Startups Ecosystem in Zanzibar: Some Old Fashioned Questions about Modern Technology

Speaker: Prof Matthew McCartney (Charter Cities Institute)

Highlights

- Professor Matthew McCartney from the Charter City Institute (CCI) has highlighted the importance of addressing traditional challenges within Zanzibar's high-tech startup ecosystem and looking at startups in comparative advantages basis. Despite the potential for investing in technology to boost the economy, the presentation emphasizes the need to focus on fundamental issues like infrastructure, education, and attitudes towards entrepreneurship.
- The presentation underscored the necessity of reliable internet, knowledge, skilled labor intensive and supportive policies for high-tech startups in attracting digital nomads to thrive. Furthermore, he points out that societal issues such as the digital divide and limited tech education in rural areas hinder progress. Key points included the need for a supportive regulatory environment that encourages innovation while also considering traditional practices and local contexts. It also highlighted how integrating old-fashioned wisdom with modern technological advancements can create a more sustainable and inclusive ecosystem

Panel Discussion

Moderator; Twamaa Hababuu – Research Assistant, ZRCP

Panelists;

- Dr. Mahmoud Alawi – Principal, Karume Institute of Science and Technology (KIST)
- Joseph Rubambe – Digital Transformation Advisor, Tony Blair's Institute (TBI)
- Prof. Preeti Aghalayam – Director in Charge, IIT Madras Zanzibar Campus
- Edgar Masatu – Innovation Analyst, UNCDF



Key Issues

- i. **Inclusive Innovation:** Ensure that tech development benefits all sectors of society, particularly marginalized communities, by making technology accessible and affordable. Means that, expand the circle of innovation and knowledge transfer with all stakeholders for the startup ecosystem in Zanzibar.
- ii. **Tech Education:** Introduce coding, software development, and digital literacy programs in schools to build a skilled workforce for the high-tech industry. KIST would be leveraging High Tech through proper utilization of the tech and talents, promote networking, and introduce incubators-industry.
- iii. **Comparative Advantage:** Zanzibar should focus on its comparative advantage sectors such as tourism and agriculture based on its geographic location.
- iv. **Digital Infrastructure:** Strengthen internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas, to support the growth of vibrant tech-use startups.
- v. **Policy Implementation:** by prioritizing people-intensive investments, creating a favorable environment, and fostering market conditions. Regularly update regulatory frameworks to keep pace with technological advancements, ensuring that startups can innovate without being hampered by outdated regulations.

PRESENTATION SIX

Topic: Towards Digitalization of Tanzania Blue Economy: Conceptualization of Smart Artisanal Fishing

Speaker: Prof Abdi Talib- Associate Professor, UDSM & ZRCP Associate

Highlights

- Digitalizing Tanzania's blue economy through smart artisanal fishing presents a transformative opportunity, particularly as artisanal fisheries contribute over 85% to domestic production and food security. By integrating digital technologies such as mobile apps, satellite tracking, smart fishing gear, IoT devices, and data analytics, this approach aims to enhance the efficiency, sustainability, and profitability of the fishing industry. These innovations can provide real-time information on fish stocks, weather conditions, and market prices, thereby improving resource management and the economic viability of fishing communities.
- Furthermore, facilitating direct access to both physical and digital markets can increase profits for artisanal fishers and promote fair trade practices. Addressing existing challenges such as reliance on traditional devices, climate change impacts, post-harvest losses, and limited data and market access, the digitalization of smart artisanal fishing offers significant opportunities for tech startups. Ultimately, this initiative can enhance the livelihoods of coastal communities and ensure the long-term sustainability of Tanzania's blue economy, particularly in Zanzibar.

Discussion: Q&A Session

Moderator; Dr Maryam Ismail – ZRCP

Key Issues

- i. **Digital Infrastructure:** Strengthen internet connectivity and mobile network coverage in coastal areas to ensure that fishermen can access digital tools and platforms. Such as Boats - GPS Tracker Installation for lost boats and other platforms for knowing fish sources.

- ii. **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Foster partnerships among government agencies, NGOs, and private sector actors to promote the development and adoption of smart fishing technologies, like the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, ZAFIRI and other stakeholders to work closely for Zanzibar economic and marine ecosystem to flourish.
- iii. **Capacity Building:** Develop training programs for fishers on the use of digital technologies, equipping them with the skills needed to utilize smart fishing tools effectively i.e. IOT device and Smart Fishing Gear.
- iv. **Sustainable Fishing Policies:** Establish regulatory frameworks that support sustainable fishing practices and emphasize on the use of digital tools for resource management and marine conservation ensuring the long-term health of marine ecosystems.

PRESENTATION SEVEN

Topic: Spice Island to Tech Titan – Why Call Centers and Data Centers Could Redefine Zanzibar’s Startups Ecosystem

Speaker: Gillead Mziray, Digital Transformation Liaison - ZRCP



Highlights

- Zanzibar, once celebrated as the Spice Island, is evolving into a tech hub, with call centers and data centers playing a pivotal role in this transformation. Leveraging its strategic location, diverse workforce, and improving internet connectivity, these centers attract global clients seeking cost-effective solutions for customer service and data management. This growth not only creates jobs for local youth but also enhances their skills in customer service and technical support.
- By investing in data centers, cloud computing, and data storage, startups can thrive without the burden of heavy infrastructure costs. Furthermore, these data centers could boost tourism by improving service and hospitality standards.
- Looking at successful examples from countries like India and the Philippines, which have effectively reduced unemployment rates through call center job creation, Zanzibar has the potential to become a leading destination for Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies. By fostering tech startups, Zanzibar can follow in the footsteps of emerging tech hubs like India, Egypt, Singapore, Kenya, the Philippines, and Rwanda.

Panel Discussion

Moderator; Joseph Rubambe, Digital Transformation Advisor, Tony Blair's Institute (TBI)

Panelists;

- Fahmin Ali – Commercial Manager, Zanlink
- Jonette Jones – Senior Cybersecurity Consultant, Deloitte
- Prof Abdi Talib – Associate Professor, UDSM & ZRCP Associate



Recommendations

- i. **Digital Infrastructure:** Discussants emphasized the need for investments in speed internet connectivity and digital tools to enable tech startups to thrive in Zanzibar context; with the use of technological and physical infrastructure to support the establishment of call and data centers, ensuring reliable internet and energy supply.
- ii. **Digital skills:** Develop training programs that equip the workforce with skills necessary for call center operations and data management to enhance job creation and boost social and economic growth in Zanzibar and around the globe attracting BPO, likely Nyota Tech-Hub willingly trying to undertake such a crucial role.
- iii. **Supportive Regulatory Environment and Infrastructure development:** Establish favorable regulations that encourage the growth of tech businesses and protect data privacy, ensuring a sustainable ecosystem for call and data centers. This enhances local cloud storage, Cybersecurity and server hosting capacity, as crucial for startups seen in Singapore and South Africa having rapid growth in their digital sectors focusing on data center infrastructure.

PRESENTATION EIGHT

Topic: Can Insurance de-risking foster innovation and startups in Zanzibar?

Speaker: Nura Masoud, ZRCP associates

Highlights

- Insurance de-risking is crucial for fostering innovation and supporting startups in Zanzibar by minimizing financial risks for entrepreneurs. By offering tailored insurance products such as liability, property, and business interruption coverage, insurers can provide a safety net for startups navigating uncertainties like market instability and investment risks. This security encourages entrepreneurs to invest in new technologies and expand their operations, thereby driving economic growth and innovation.
- Moreover, de-risking through insurance can attract more investors and venture capitalists, as adequate coverage enhances a startup's appeal for funding. To further support early-stage startups, creating subsidized insurance options can reduce coverage costs, while education and awareness campaigns about the benefits of insurance and risk management will help build resilient growth. Together, these strategies will empower startups in Zanzibar to innovate and explore new ideas, ultimately strengthening the local economy.

Panel Discussion:

Moderator; Dr Twahir M. Khalfan – ZRCP

Panelist:

- Neemayani Sanare – Associate Director, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)
- Said Baharoon – Director of Operation, ZRCP
- Dr Huda Yussuf – Senior Lecturer, SUZA & ZRCP Associate
- Nura Masoud - ZRCP associates



Recommendations

- i. **Customized Insurance Products:** Create specialized insurance products designed for startups, focusing on their unique risks and needs to provide adequate coverage and support.
- ii. **Awareness and Education:** Conduct workshops and seminars to educate entrepreneurs about the benefits of insurance and risk management, fostering a culture of safety and preparedness.
- iii. **Collaboration:** Facilitate partnerships between insurance companies and startups to design innovative solutions that address industry-specific challenges, enhancing overall resilience and growth.
- iv. There is increasing competition from insurance techs and technology firms for both business and talent. To maintain a culture of innovation and a customer-centric standard operating model, insurance companies need to transform, adopt a digital mindset, and shift from being reactionary to proactively adapting to customer needs and expectations.

CLOSING CEREMONY



The Board Chairman of ZRCP Professor Mohammed Hafidh gave the vote of thanks to senior government officials for opening and closing the conference, and the commitment to support ZRCP and other non-government actors. He equally expressed gratitude to all sponsors and participants for making the conference successful.

The Minister of the President's Office Labour, Economic Affairs and Empowerment Hon. Shariff A. Shariff has expressed the desire to play a leading role in ensuring that Zanzibar is building a more vibrant ecosystem and the economy benefits from emerging industry which is transformative.

The conference concluded with remarks from Hon. Hemed Suleiman Abdulla, the Second Vice President of Zanzibar. He began by acknowledging the vital role of independent think tank institutions like ZRCP and the invaluable contributions of private sponsors in facilitating policy dialogues focused on critical initiatives and policy issues related to the startup ecosystem, which have the potential to significantly enhance the living standards of the people in Zanzibar.

He emphasized that, the recommendations emerged in this conference should be presented to relevant institution in a timely manner, together with that he assured the participant that “all key recommendations submitted to the government will be addressed accordingly with the aim of strengthening national development efforts”

Finally, he expressed the readiness of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGoZ) to continue fostering favorable conditions that support young entrepreneurs and businesses. This commitment is essential for driving economic development and growth throughout the country

WAY FORWARD

- **Support Startup Policy Development:** Advocate for the establishment of a Startup Policy or Startup Act to create a conducive environment for startups. This policy should include provisions for tax incentives, access to funding, and regulatory simplification to encourage entrepreneurial activity.
- **Enhance Education:** Invest in education reforms aimed at cultivating critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Incorporating entrepreneurship education into school curricula can inspire students to become proactive innovators and equip them with the skills needed to navigate the startup landscape.
- **Strengthen Collaborations:** Foster partnerships across sectors to improve industry linkages and capacity-building efforts. Collaborations between startups, established businesses, academic institutions, and government entities can create a more cohesive ecosystem that supports growth and innovation.
- **Promote Visibility:** Increase awareness of available resources and funding opportunities for startups. Establishing platforms for knowledge sharing and networking can help founders connect with potential investors, mentors, and collaborators, enhancing their chances of success.
- **Potential of Call centres investments Zanzibar** represent a promising avenue for economic development, particularly in regions with expanding fiber networks. By leveraging high-speed internet, call centres can operate efficiently, providing customer service and support for various industries. This sector has the potential to create numerous job opportunities, particularly for young people and women, contributing to local employment and skill development