

Tanzania DECP trains employers' organisation on advocacy and lobbying

Tanzania is recording a rather bad position in the international indicators on the quality of the business environment. 'Doing Business' of the World Bank classifies Tanzania at position 132 out of 190 countries, whilst the World Economic Forum, in his Competitiveness Report, is hardly any more positive when classifying Tanzania at rank 116 out of 138 countries.

The Tanzanian employers' organization ATE, a partner of DECP, is fully aware of the negative impact and endeavours pro-actively to improve the business climate.

In that context, ATE appealed to DECP for additional staff training and support in helping to train the staff and to develop a business agenda. As employers' organisation, ATE mainly concentrates on labour affairs issues although it intends in the future to get also involved in more economic issues, and move from employers' organisation to business member organization with a wider policy coverage.

At present the main issues are concerned related to skills. The reform of the skills levy (4,5% contribution on wages), of which at present more than half is used for other purposes than skills development, is high on the agenda. Still in the field of skills, ATE pleads also, in view of the serious skills mismatch, for a more labour market oriented approach in the educational system. Furthermore ATE has a range of proposals to enhance productivity in the country, to act upon some gaps in the labour law, and to diminish taxes on earned income from work.

With the 2 day training for the staff, DECP supports ATE's moves to publish an attractive business agenda and to improve the business environment via a better mastering of advocacy and lobbying skills. Previous successes of ATE in advocacy and lobbying, which allowed already to diminish partially the skills levy from 6% to 4,5%, are positive signs that employers concerns, when backed up by fact based evidence and a wide mandate, can effectively lead to policy reforms which improve the business environment.