



Ambasáid na hÉireann | Tanzania
Embassy of Ireland | Tanzania
Ubalozi wa Ireland | Tanzania

Ireland's new programme for grassroots action on gender equality in Tanzania

The Embassy of Ireland is inviting expressions of interest from reputable and experienced organisations registered in Tanzania to design and implement Ireland's new programme for grassroots action on gender equality. The programme will support the Government of Tanzania's commitment to achieving gender equality and women and girls' empowerment by channelling resources to community level. The aim of the programme is to facilitate inclusive grassroots action for gender equality. It is not intended to formalise grassroots action, but rather to fund, facilitate and connect local processes and action. The programme will do this by channelling resources to community level to build a platform for diverse voices that will strengthen the women's movement in Tanzania.

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to set out the rationale, objectives and process for establishing a new Embassy of Ireland programme to support grassroots action to advance gender equality in Tanzania.

The scoping and design phase for this new programme will take place in 2023-24, with consultation and market testing sessions with stakeholders and partners having commenced in July 2023. The programme will be rolled out from 2024 in phases, initially targeting one of Ireland's priority regions in Tanzania (Dodoma, Kigoma, Tanga or Zanzibar). The intention is to scale up the programme over the remaining three years of Ireland's current Mission Strategy period, up to December 2026. This scale-up will be informed by the performance of the implementing partner and funding recipients, and the results of the programme for participating groups and communities. The Embassy will take an iterative approach by incorporating lessons learned and testing assumptions of the programme throughout its implementation.

The indicative budget for the programme over the three-year period is €3m.

2. Context and Rationale

This initiative is central to the Embassy's commitment to support the women's movement as part of the delivery of its Mission Strategy for Tanzania 2022-26, and forms part of Ireland's wider commitments to localisation and enabling civil society, having signed up to the OECD DAC Recommendation in 2021.

Gender equality is a central pillar of Ireland's foreign policy, [The Global Island](#), and international development policy, [A Better World](#), which establishes gender equality as one of four core priorities for Ireland's official development assistance. *A Better World* commits Ireland to having an overarching focus on women and girls in all of its partnerships and interventions.

The women's movement in Ireland has played an essential role in driving gender equality domestically and in advocating for women's full participation in all aspects of society. This experience has informed our approach in other contexts and through our international development programme. Globally, Ireland supports women's movements both as part of its broader support for civil society and as a key channel to advocate for change in economic, social and political spheres.

In Tanzania, very limited sources of funding are available to support grassroots initiatives and groups that respond to gender inequalities and barriers faced by women and girls. This means that such groups are generally unable to grow to a point where they can rejuvenate and diversify the women's movement, and lack the profile and access to make their voices heard. The Embassy's new programme for grassroots action on gender equality is designed to respond to this challenge and gap.

Ireland's position is that women and girls' physical autonomy – both in terms of choice regarding their sexual and reproductive health and rights, and the freedom to live without violence – provides the essential foundation for their broader empowerment. We believe that a diverse and representative women's movement plays a central role in countering the high levels of abuse currently experienced by women and girls, as well as enhancing their resilience, confidence and capacity to claim their rights. The establishment of this new programme from 2024 will form part of Ireland's broader response to the widespread and persistent social acceptance of violence against women in Tanzania.

The President of Tanzania, Dr. Samia Suhulu Hassan, has made gender equality a signature priority of her administration and central to the long-term goal to transform Tanzania into a middle-income country. The National Five-Year Development Plan (FYDP III, 2022-2026) contains clear commitments on inclusive development, with a specific emphasis on advancing gender equality by strengthening efforts to end gender-based violence, and promoting participation and inclusion of women in leadership at all levels of society (p. 270). Tanzania has sought to realise these commitments through three key national action plans:

- Tanzania's Generation Equality Program, focusing on economic justice and rights for women and girls.
- Tanzania's second National Plan of Action on Ending Violence Against Women and Children, currently under finalisation.
- Tanzania's first National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

The Embassy's new programme is anchored in Tanzania's gender equality commitments made in the FYDP III, and is designed to contribute to the delivery of these national frameworks.

3. Objectives

The overall objective of this new programme is to support inclusive grassroots action to advance gender equality in Tanzania.

The programme will be built on the central premise that women and champions for gender equality are rights-holders and change agents, rather than beneficiaries. The programme will support eligible groups whose lowest scope of operations should cover at least a ward. Different bands of funding and support are envisaged to cater to groups of varying sizes, composition and levels of formalisation.

The programme will focus on enabling grassroots action for gender equality by broadening access to financial resources for local groups and organisations. In particular:

- (i) Tailoring grant and risk management mechanisms to informal group settings.
- (ii) Enabling participating groups to tap into a wider network of mentorship, peer learning and capacity building.
- (iii) Linking local groups with national processes to share evidence and impact.

The majority of the programme funds will be channelled directly to grassroots level in support of local ideas and solutions that advance gender equality and engage the wider community. A portion of the funds will also be used to:

- Raise awareness of the programme among the target audience i.e. community groups and grassroots actors working to advance gender equality.
- Identify a diverse and inclusive range of community groups that are eligible to apply for funding and support.
- Identify and provide appropriate levels of oversight and verification suitable for informal groups.
- Tailor supports – both financial and otherwise – to participating groups of varying sizes, composition and levels of formalisation.
- Manage strong and transparent systems of monitoring, oversight and selection.
- Coordinate peer learning and synergies in and between participating groups to foster collective action and impact.
- Conduct operational research to test the parameters of the programme as it is rolled out.

4. Process of partner identification and selection

The Embassy is seeking to identify a partner organisation to design implement this programme.

Following outreach and consultation on the initial design, the Embassy will invite expressions of interest to manage the programme from eligible organisations¹ that possess both the technical capacity to manage the disbursement of funds to grassroots, and the requisite experience in supporting women's movement-building at different levels. A closed call for proposals will be issued thereafter.

The following stages are planned in identifying an implementing partner and establishing the programme:

- **Stage 1 (Q3/4 2023): Initial Consultation and Design.** Inputs from potential partners and key stakeholders to test the parameters and scope of the programme, with any ideas shared treated as open source. Advanced concept to be shared with this group and wider set of stakeholders.
- **Stage 2 (Q4 2023): Expressions of interest** invited from organisations with the proven capacity and expertise to manage the programme. Partners will have three weeks to submit an Expression of Interest (see outline eligibility criteria that will be used for shortlisting below).

¹ The Embassy has existing mechanisms that support Government and UN organisations, and therefore neither category is eligible to apply to manage this programme.

- **Stage 3 (Q1 2024): Closed Call** issued to partners selected from the expression of interest stage, with desired results specified. A template for proposals and assessment criteria will be provided. Partners will have at least four weeks to submit a detailed proposal.
- **Stage 4 (Q1 2024): Assessment** of proposals
- **Stage 5 (Q1 2024): Selection** of partner. The Embassy intends to announce an update on the programme and partnership at International Women's Day 2024.
- **Stage 6 (Q2 2024): Due diligence** and next steps including organisational capacity assessment, appraisal, review of partner systems and processes, detailed work plan, budget and results framework.
- **Stage 7 (Q2 2024): Contracting and co-creation of detailed programme.** Set-up of a multi annual grant agreement (2024-26), with a break clause.