

## Clear empowerment policies for businesses needed, govt told

By Felix Andrew

THE government has been urged to develop clear policy and guidelines on empowerment of local businessmen since no country has ever developed without its own business class.

This was said in Dar es Salaam by Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania - Advocacy Component (Best-ac) deputy team leader Ali Mjella when explaining the challenges facing private sector organisations.

He said Tanzania has a lot

of investment opportunities but lacks clear policies and guidelines on empowering businesses.

"The government should survey and earmark land for investment activities to make it easier for investors to obtain the resource," he said.

He recommended the government to solve the chronic capital needs problem for domestic businesses by employing non conventional methods of financial institutions.

Tanzania must develop clear policy and laws for domestic industrial development, including its protection and cast away the

folly of importing everything and exporting nothing, he said.

According to him, the government should increase efforts in the fight of red tape and corruption that still impede investments.

Tanzania's relative abundance of land must be used to solve the production crisis in agriculture through commercialisation of agricultural activities and not to solve the land scarcity problems of other East African countries, which will perpetuate further the dominance of the prevailing peasant agriculture system.

Mjella also called upon the

government to phase out peasant agriculture, since it has been proved that it will not liberalise farmers and improve the economy.

Explaining the functions of Best-Ac, he said it supports private sector organisations through grants and technical assistance to become institutionally and intellectually competent in achieving changes in the business environment.

"Its purpose is to sustainably enhance the quality and effectiveness of Tanzanian private sector advocacy for an improved investment climate," he said.

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## Businesses need clear empowerment policies, govt told

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The support is used in different areas such as training and technical assistance to private sector organisations mainly operating in Dar es Salaam, he added.

In the current phase of Best-Ac the management team has undertaken to use the Advocacy Composite Logic Model (ACLM) as its central starting point to reach the best project implementation determinations, he said.

Despite the challenges, he said, they have noticed some changes since the programme started its implementation.

There have been positive government measures in some of the advocacy projects implemented with the support of Best-Ac, he said.

Currently, he said, the most important change is the prevalence of several dialogue processes on Tanzania's business and investment climate facilitated through Best-Ac's support.

Best-Ac which is under the Prime Minister's Office was launched in 2004 and is funded by Danish, Netherlands, Sweden and UK governments.

# Seek our support, Best tells youth business groups

By Felix Andrew

YOUTH organisations dealing with business regulations and policies advocacy have been called upon to apply for support from the Business Environment Strengthening for Tanzania - Advocacy Component (BEST-AC).

BEST-AC is a component of BEST Programme responsible for supporting private sector advocacy through membership organisations, or PSOs - private sector organisations.

Speaking to this paper in an interview, the organisation's programme officer, Aika Kihunrwa, said Best supports youths through grants and technical assistance to become institutionally and intellectually competent in achieving positive changes in business through advocacy.

Asked whether the

Programme has received any applications from the youths looking for grants, she said they are yet to receive one.

"We welcome any membership based private sector organisations to apply for our funds if they have any advocacy issues on business regulations or policies," she said.

According to her, BEST-AC aims to improve the business environment for the private sectors and reduce overall unemployment.

Speaking during the 20th meeting of the Board of governors of African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in Arusha recently, Finance minister Mustafa

Mkulo was quoted saying there was a need to create more and better jobs, enhance gender equality, improve access to employment, and hence eradicate poverty and stimulate economic growth.

He said African countries

including Tanzania have to see how to get youths to become productive, adding that issue of youth employment is on the agenda for every nation at the moment, be it developing or developed.

He noted that that is the major challenge to poverty eradication, economic growth, social development and social integration.

"We see it coming up time and time again, how do we get our youth to become productive and create employment for them?" he queried.

Mkulo said there is a need to look at how the different sectors of economy can become attractive and get the youths engaged.

According to him the recent events in North Africa and the Middle East have gone to prove that the issue of youth unemployment cannot

be ignored.

Integrated labour force survey indicates that the labour force is about 53.7 percent of the country's estimated population of 42 million.

Out of this, 68 percent comprise of young people aged between 15 - 35 years.

"Although statistics show that about 88.3 percent of the youths are employed, the majority (80 percent) works mainly in the villages in smallholding farming as self employed or unpaid family workers," he stated.

In Africa, youth account for 37 per cent of the working-age population, but are also 60 per cent of the continent's unemployed.

In some countries with fastest-growing and most youthful population in the world, the unemployment rate of young people has even reached 80 per cent.