

TANZANIA CIVIL ENGINEERING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION – TACECA NEED FOR CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS COLLABORATION IN TRAINING

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Abstract

The trend towards market-oriented training systems gives an increasingly prominent role to the private sector. Conversely, the traditional role of the State is evolving from government-led and government-owned training systems towards creating an enabling environment for enterprises, employers and workers to invest and actively participate in a collective training effort. ⁱ

1.0 INTRODUCTION

During the socialist era, training in Tanzania was exclusively provided by government owned institutions or through government/parastatal sponsorship. The private sector was then negligible as most major activities, including manufacturing, trading, construction, education and training were run/provided by the government or government owned institutions such as the universities, colleges, vocational schools, etc.

Political changes that took place from 1985 ushered in changes not only on the political scene but also opened the door for comprehensive private sector participation in most activities. As government outsourcing increased the private sector also grew in order to respond to the increased demand for services and supplies. The construction sector in particular grew fast from only a handful of construction firms in the early 90s to currently more than 4000.

Despite these changes, training and skills development in the construction industry has to a greater extent been provided by government institutions. For example all basic education in construction (primary, secondary, university and vocational training) is still mostly provided by government institutions. Most professional development is also provided by government owned institutions (ERB, CRB, NCC, PPRA, PMORALG, ATTI, etc.). Where private sector institutions such as TACECA, ACET and equipment suppliers have organised training, they have depended mostly on technical resources provided by government institutions.

2.0 DIVERSITY

Increased demand for training and other services has strained public resources and curtailed the government capacity to provide adequate and quality services while increasingly attracting private sector interest in investing in training activities in the industry. Most training and skills development organised by both private and public institutions has thus responded to immediate needs assessment results of certain identified focus groups (contractors, consultants, engineers, etc.). This approach has had major set-backs including:

- Lack of researched base for forecasting long term demand;
- Lack of focus on countrywide or global trends;
- Lack of coordination between key players, resulting in several providers providing similar training for same target groups and hence a duplication of efforts and waste of resources (refer to annex on training provided by different institutions);
- Lack of common or coordinated certification mechanisms resulting in failure by institutions to recognise certificates offered by other institutions.

As the diversity of the demand for training in the construction industry increases it will become more imperative to consider alliances between the interested parties as the key strategy to improve the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, equity and sustainability of training policies and systems.

Training should increasingly be conceived as a cooperative effort in which the various public and private institutions share responsibilities. The partners concerned contribute to the overall training effort, and articulate their inputs to make the best use of their respective strengths and comparative advantage¹. With increased private sector participation in training, and the evolving trend towards autonomy for government institutions, it becomes imperative to establish collaboration among stakeholders in order to establish a coherent system of education and training in the industry.

3.0 PURPOSE OF COLLABORATION

Collaboration is aimed at:

- Coordinating the training activities of public institutions such as ministries (Education, Science, MoID, PMORALG, etc.), NCC, CRB, ERB, institutions of higher learning, etc. in order to make training more coherent with national policies and strategies and with national and global market demand; Coordinating is also aimed at removing overlapping and consequently reducing costs incurred by employees and employers;
- Establishing a system for evaluating and assessing the training offered to the construction industry by various institutions;
- Establishing mechanisms for enhancing research in training in order to forecast national and global demand and supply of human resources so that the country is able to evolve strategies for making the country self sufficient and eventually a net exporter of construction skills;
- Establishing a common certification system that will enable stakeholders to understand and recognise each others' training;
- Establishing the framework for allocation of responsibilities for provision and funding of training;
- Preparation and implementation of construction industry training policy and strategies.

4.0 AREAS OF COLLABORATION

Major areas of collaboration include:

- **Certification and coordination**
 - o As more institutions, both private and public, engage in training certification becomes a crucial area which requires collaboration in order to harmonise qualifications offered by different institutions. Presence of common certification enables easy recognition, and seamless continuation or upgrading regardless of institution attended by a certificate holder;
 - o The certifying institution should either be the one to offer certificates for major courses / training or establish a mechanism to certify certificates offered by accredited institutions;
 - o The certifying institution shall also be the one to coordinate the training activities within the industry.

- **Research and career development**

Research is needed in order to establish the needs for training both for individual trainees (supply side) as well as establishing the needs of the industry (demand side). Research will:

- o Facilitate the development of new syllabi and training programmes that can be adopted by training institutions and provide guidance to stakeholders wishing to develop careers in the industry or those wishing to further develop their human resources;
- o Research shall also facilitate forecasting the demand and supply of construction industry skills and thus enable training institutions and other stakeholders to respond appropriately;

- Research usually fosters technology adoption and stimulates productivity.

Collaboration in research is needed especially to mobilise financing for research undertakings and establish modalities for disseminating the findings.

5.0 TYPES OF COLLABORATION

As indicated above, the construction industry private sector is already a major user of human resources. There is therefore need to involve the private sector in the process of formulating major decisions. Any collaborative effort should include:

- **Public – public collaboration** aimed at coordinating the activities of public institutions such as ministries (Education, Science, MoID, PMORALG, etc.), NCC, CRB, ERB, institutions of higher learning.
- **Public – private collaboration** aimed at making the system more participatory and increasing awareness and resource mobilisation.
- **Private – private** collaboration aimed at sharing experiences and consolidating private sector efforts in training endeavours.

6.0 MODALITIES FOR COOPERATION

There is need to establish a body / forum will ensure that trainings undertaken in the industry are:

- Industry governed and focused;
- Of high quality (approved syllabi and training materials, approved trainers, recommended resources);
- Cost-effective for industry and workers;
- Focused on the demands of the industry.

For example, stakeholders could establish a construction industry training Council, Board or Authority or designating an existing institution to coordinate training activities within the industry (NCC, NACTE, NIT, etc.), or they could even form another type of institution that could give more prominence to the involvement of the private sector. The major issues to be considered are funding, sustainability and inclusiveness.

Coordination of public sector training activities needs to be done at the Ministerial level. The government should in this case identify the most suitable structure of such coordination.

In addition it is also important for the construction industry private sector to consider establishing its own forum for articulating private sector issues.

7.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The increase in private sector participation in construction industry activities and globalisation of the industry have made it necessary for private and public sector stakeholders to collaborate in the design and delivery of training services within the industry. Collaboration areas include certification and coordination and research and career development.

It is therefore recommended that stakeholders take steps to establish mechanisms for collaboration and coordination within and among the public and private sectors.

REFERENCES

1. Ayse G. Mitchell. Strategic training partnerships between the State and enterprises: ILO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PAPERS, 1998