

PRESS STATEMENT

ReSea Project: Equipping Women and Youth Entrepreneurs with Business Management and Soft Skills

Tanga, Tanzania – 15 June 2025 – The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, in collaboration with partners of the ReSea Project: Mission Inclusion, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Women Fund Tanzania-Trust (WFT-T), and Ocean Hub Africa (OHA), with support from Global Affairs Canada, today officially launched a seven-day Blue Economy Bootcamp. The training aims to equip coastal women and youth entrepreneurs from the Tanga–Pemba Seascape with practical business management and soft skills needed to build sustainable and inclusive enterprises.

Officiating the launch was Dr. Batilda Burian, Regional Commissioner of Tanga, who also unveiled two key training resources: the Blue Economy Entrepreneurship Trainers Manual and the Soft Skills Manual. These manuals are designed to serve as toolkits supporting the entrepreneurs through a seven-month mentorship phase that follows the bootcamp. The manuals provide structured, practical guidance for facilitators in delivering training on Business Management, Voice, and Agency within the Blue Economy context. They incorporate sector-specific knowledge, real-life case studies, and localized examples to ensure learning is relevant, contextualized, and actionable.

The bootcamp brings together 24 women and youth from 12 enterprise groups across the Tanga–Pemba Seascape, specifically from two districts in Tanga (Mkinga and Pangani) and four districts in Pemba (Mkoani, Micheweni, Chake Chake, and Wete). These participants are actively engaged in Blue Economy value chains, including sea cucumber farming, crab fattening, sardine processing, seaweed farming, and value addition of marine products.

“Coastal women entrepreneurs face real challenges: building business skills, understanding sustainable value chains, and accessing finance. This bootcamp directly addresses these gaps by equipping participants with practical tools to build viable enterprises in the Blue Economy,” said **Genevieve Gauthier**, Director of International Programmes, **Mission Inclusion**.

The Blue Economy represents a transformative opportunity for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, especially for coastal communities dependent on marine and aquatic resources. Key sectors include sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, coastal tourism, maritime transport, seaweed farming, and marine biotechnology, all of which drive job creation, food security, and environmental stewardship.

Despite the potential, many women and youth entrepreneurs lack essential skills in business planning, value chain integration, and investment readiness. They also face limitations in leadership and communication capacity, further constraining business growth.

In response, the ReSea Project is rolling out this bootcamp as part of a broader entrepreneurship incubation program focused on providing women and youth entrepreneurs with tools in strategic

business assessment, planning, investment readiness, and soft skill enhancement. These skills are critical to scaling sustainable businesses that contribute to a resilient and equitable Blue Economy.

“A just Blue Economy requires women and youth as active leaders—not passive beneficiaries. They are already driving innovation and environmental stewardship in coastal communities. This training recognizes their leadership and provides the tools to expand their impact,” said **Andreanne Martel**, Project Director, **ReSea Project**, Mission Inclusion.

“True economic transformation happens when everyone participates fully. By centering women and youth entrepreneurs, this program aims to build an inclusive and dynamic Blue Economy that creates opportunities for all coastal communities to thrive together,” added **Perpetua Angima**, Chief of Party, **ReSea Project**, Mission Inclusion.

Dr. Elinasi Monga IUCN Regional Programme Manager emphasized that many coastal communities are yet to fully harness the ocean’s economic potential. *“This incubation program is designed to identify and overcome the challenges people face in accessing marine-based opportunities. Our goal is to transform these barriers into viable solutions that improve community livelihoods while ensuring environmental sustainability,”* he noted.

Speaking during the opening session, **Amon Maenda, Ocean Hub Africa (OHA) Representative**, underscored the broader purpose of the initiative. *“This is more than a skills workshop, it’s a transformative process. It enables participants to advance to the next stage of their entrepreneurial journey and become key agents of change within the blue economy. At OHA, we are committed to unlocking ocean-based opportunities for inclusive growth,”* he said.

Key to success in entrepreneurship is the development of soft skills, encompassing people skills and interpersonal skills to build self-confidence of women and youth, increasing their motivation and interest in either starting or expanding a blue economy business.

“As we grow in entrepreneurship skills, let us also develop inner strengths that shape us into resilient women and youth who can advocate for women’s rights through our voices during this time of transformation. Let your voices gain the power to enhance the meaningful participation of women in the Blue Economy,” said **Glory Mbia, Women Fund Tanzania-Trust (WFTT)** Gender Coordinator for the ReSea Project.

Officiating the event, **Dr. Batilda Burian, Tanga Regional Commissioner**, delivered a powerful call to action. *“To all participants, especially women and youth, consider the knowledge you gain here as a gateway to impact. Use it to uplift your families, strengthen your economic groups, and inspire your communities. Launch innovative businesses, add value to marine products, explore sustainable businesses, and become champions of equity and progress in the blue economy.”*

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