



RELEVANT INFORMATION ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND CONTEXT

Empowering Today · Transforming Tomorrow

BASIC NEEDS	EDUCATION & KNOWLEDGE	TALENT & CAPABILITIES
Water · Sanitation Dignified Spaces	Inclusive Education Gender Equality	Art · Culture Individual Capabilities

Malaika Bridge Away Foundation · Mwanza, Tanzania

Empowering Today — Transforming Tomorrow

Data from: United Nations · World Bank · UNICEF · UNDP · NBS Tanzania · UNFPA · OMS/WHO
| 2024–2025

Institutional reference document prepared to support the intervention of non-governmental organizations in Tanzania, with special emphasis on infrastructure, education, gender equality and talent development in rural communities of the Mwanza Region.

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1. Introduction – Current Context

A Human Fracture

There is an ancient wound in the body of humanity. Sometimes we see it, though it is not visible to the naked eye. It does not bleed in a way that might alarm those who prefer not to look, but it pulses with a persistence that should shame us: inequality in the rights and opportunities with which each human being arrives in the world and then travels through it. Inequality does not depend on talent, character, or will. Nor does it depend on those qualities that the human condition distributes with admirable indifference to merit, differences, and capabilities. It depends on something as arbitrary and unjust as the place where one is born. Because being born matters. It matters too much, and that is precisely where inequality becomes evident as the problem.

The Same World, But Different

Let us imagine two children who come into the world at the same instant. One opens their eyes in Stockholm, in Oslo, in Zürich. The other opens theirs in Mwanza, or Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania, or in a nameless village deep in any disadvantaged region of the planet. Both cry the same. Both feel hunger with the same urgency, cold and heat with the same sense, maternal love with the same absolute need. They are, in their essence, equally profound and identical. And yet, we have already decided for them — they are not equal. The needs of some are met, and those of others are forgotten.

The first will have a very different life from the second. One will grow up with guaranteed access to education, medicine, nutrition, infrastructure, the rule of law and welfare. They will stumble, like everyone, but will have safety nets to catch them. But the second will face, from their very first breath, an accumulation of deprivations that reinforce one another: without clean water, nor minimum sanitary conditions to protect their childhood and development, without tools to awaken their intelligence, without paths to connect their potential with the world, without options to defend their dignity. Both possess the same human potential. But only one will have the real possibility to develop it.

That difference in vital development is not natural. It is not rational. Nor is it logical, just, or in any way human. It is a very primitive and ancient construction. And what human beings build, and know to be an error, human beings themselves can and must correct.

The Gap Persists — and Even Grows

What is most disturbing is not that inequality exists — human history has always known injustice — but that, after centuries of progress, philosophy, ethics and morality, scientific and technological knowledge, and other advances... that gap does not shrink. In many respects, it widens. And the worst of it is that this has been happening for thousands of years while we share and are the same, and even now, at this stage of our existence, the gap continues to grow before us.

While in the most developed countries life expectancy exceeds eighty years and infant mortality approaches token figures, in sub-Saharan Africa more than three million children die each year before reaching five years of age, almost all from causes that humanity resolved decades ago: diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria, malnutrition, etc. "Diseases of poverty" — but in reality, they stem from human indifference.

While in Europe or North America a young person can access scholarships, public universities, social safety nets, etc., in vast regions of Asia, Africa, South America, and other corners of the world, millions of adolescents abandon school due to lack of opportunity. They are trapped in a cycle that is not destiny, but a trap. An inherited trap, perpetuated and, to a great extent, always ignored by the most privileged.

And while the debate in the most prosperous nations revolves around artificial intelligence, space exploration or the energy transition — all very necessary and legitimate — in other parts of the same planet the most urgent debate remains the same as always: how to survive tomorrow.

These are not different planets. It is the same one. And that simultaneity should be unbearable to us. If we call ourselves human beings.

The Contradiction That Defines Us

Here lies the most unsettling paradox of our condition: we are the only species capable of recognizing its own errors, of naming them, of theorizing about them with philosophical sophistication, of being moved by them... and of continuing to commit them. We proclaim equality as the supreme value in our constitutions, in our speeches, in our international treaties. We inscribe it in marble and on paper. In our social principles. In our family upbringing. With our friends... And then we abandon it in practice with an ease that says much about the distance that still exists between our words and our conscience. And we know it does not exist because we do not practice it individually in society.

This contradiction is not an accident. It is a collective choice, though no one recognizes it as such. Every time the international community allocates a hundred times more resources to armaments than to education in the most vulnerable countries, it is choosing. Every time global trade systems systematically favour those already favoured, it is choosing. Every time solidarity is limited to a one-off gesture in response to a televised catastrophe and then withdraws as quickly as it arrived, it is choosing.

And yet, it would be unjust, and above all false, to conclude that there is no hope. That would be yet another contradiction and an even greater, more serious human error.

What Makes Us Human

Because we are also a social species that builds hospitals in war zones, that crosses oceans to deliver vaccines, that teaches reading to those who never held a book, that donates, that embraces, that becomes indignant and acts. That feels sadness at injustice. That is moved. That laughs at the good and cries at the bad. Even for those we don't know. The same human nature that produces contradiction also harbours the capacity to overcome it.

And that capacity — that insistence on fighting against what we know is wrong, even though the task is titanic and progress slow — is perhaps the noblest thing we possess. Not intelligence in the abstract, not knowledge; not technology, nor lived experience: but the will of some to stand on the right side of ourselves when it still costs everyone to do so. It is the evidence that we still trust the human being. In ourselves.

Assuming that we are all equal is not a naïve statement. It is an ethical horizon, internal and very deep within our species. It is one of the most demanding things, if you truly believe it, and the one who makes equality a starting point — even as reality shows it is not — is a destination towards which one can walk with determination and coherence. A permanent project whose objective is human consciousness.

It is that impulse that has given rise, throughout history, to every initiative that has tried to build bridges where it was evidently right and human to do so.

NGOs exist and organise themselves to fight against that inequality. They are a bridge to bridge and overcome that gap. They reveal the coherence of the human condition, the hope and the values that have made us evolve rationally and emotionally to become the species we are today. So that we can give meaning to and continue to call ourselves, as a global and universal society: 'humanity'.

Bridges Are Built

Projects like Malaika Bridge Away Foundation are born precisely from that conviction. Not from condescending charity, but from the honest recognition of a shared debt. It is a response — modest in scale, enormous in intention — to the question that every person with conscience should ask themselves at least once: what part of this problem belongs to me? And what is within my reach to help resolve it?

Like so many other initiatives working on the development of the most disadvantaged people, Malaika Bridge Away Foundation starts from simple yet radical premises: "empowering today transforms tomorrow" and "fostering education and talent equally to evolve." Let us give the opportunity and make these premises a reality. Let us overcome that injustice, which, beyond being morally unacceptable, is a colossal waste for all of humanity. Every child who does not reach their full potential is a loss that impoverishes us all, even if we live thousands of kilometres away and never experience it.

Changing that reality requires conviction, perseverance and the humility to understand that no project is sufficient on its own. But it also requires beginning. It requires taking the step, extending the hand, building that bridge that gives name and meaning to those who choose not to look away.

We live in a single world and it is the one we have. And in that world there exist, right now, human beings with the same intelligence, the same curiosity and potential, who have the same right to flourish in equality with others more privileged. The possibility to achieve that today is to build them the bridge they need. Building is, perhaps, the most human task that exists.

2. TANZANIA PROFILE

Tanzania is the most populated nation in East Africa and ranks among the twenty most populated in the world. The following statistical profile establishes the general framework of the country, from which the analysis of the Mwanza Region is derived more specifically.

All data come from primary international sources of the highest authority.

2.1 Population and Growth

Tanzania's population has experienced unprecedented growth: from 12.3 million inhabitants recorded in the 1967 census to approximately 70.5 million estimated for 2025 by the United Nations, representing a fivefold increase in less than six decades. The annual growth rate of 2.9% and a total fertility rate of 4.39 children per woman project that the country will surpass 100 million inhabitants before 2040.

- 70.5 M: Estimated population 2025 (UN/UNFPA 2024)
- 2.9%: Annual growth (Worldometers/UN 2024)
- 17.6 years: Median age (UN WPP 2024)
- 4.39: Children per woman (UNFPA 2025)

Source: UN World Population Prospects 2024, NBS Tanzania PHC 2022; UNFPA Data 2025, Worldometers 2025

The 2022 National Population and Housing Census — the sixth since independence — confirmed 59.8 million inhabitants in Mainland Tanzania and 1.9 million in Zanzibar, with a sex breakdown of 51.3% women (31.7 M) and 48.7% men (30 M). Over 45% of the population is under 15 years old, which defines a young demographic pyramid that places growing and sustained pressure on educational services, healthcare and employment.

Source: UN World Population Prospects 2024, NBS Tanzania PHC 2022; UNFPA Data 2025, Worldometers 2025

2.2 Human Development Index and Poverty

Despite sustained economic growth over the past decade and a half, Tanzania continues to rank in the lowest bracket of the global Human Development Index. The 2024 HDI placed the country at 167th of 193 nations, with a value of

0.532 — up from 0.353 in 1990 — reflecting real but insufficient improvements to break the cycle of structural poverty.

Demographic growth outpaces the rate of poverty reduction in absolute terms.

- 167th/193: HDI rank 2024 (UNDP 2024)
- 26.4%: Below national poverty line (World Bank, 2018)
- 31%: Rural poverty (MCC, 2024)
- 80%: Poor in rural areas (UNCTAD)

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2023/24; BTI Project Tanzania 2026; MCC Tanzania Constraints Analysis 2024; UNCTAD 2025

The Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) 2024 recognised Tanzania among the nine countries in the world with significant and verified reductions in multidimensional poverty during the analysed period. However, social exclusion persists with marked divisions between rural and urban areas, and between rich and poor regions, with a clear gender gap in poverty rates.

Source: Global MPI 2024 - UNDP/Oxford OPHI; BTI Tanzania 2026

Tanzania presents one of the most critical humanitarian urgency profiles in the world. According to World Bank data (2024), more than 49% of the population lives in extreme poverty. Priority intervention focuses on areas where the lack of basic infrastructure directly compromises survival; and secondly, on the development and growth of people themselves, through access to education and opportunities for personal and social development, so that this development can be truly autonomous and sustainable in the long term.

As an illustrative example of this reality: in primary education alone, there is a widespread dropout rate exceeding 50%, caused by lack of material resources, absence of basic health and sanitation, and living conditions that make educational continuity impossible.

Source: World Bank, Poverty and Inequality Assessment Tanzania 2024; UNICEF Education Tanzania 2024

2.3 Rural-Urban Distribution

Approximately 59.2% of the Tanzanian population lives in rural areas — a figure that, while down from 70% in the 1990s, remains high in continental and global perspective. Population density ranges from 12 inhabitants/km² in the Katavi Region to 3,133 inhabitants/km² in Dar es Salaam, illustrating an extremely unequal territorial distribution. The vast majority of state services — ministries, courts, cultural infrastructure, specialised training centres — are concentrated in capitals, leaving rural communities in a situation of structural marginalisation.

Source: Demographics of Tanzania Wikipedia/CIA World Factbook; Worldometers 2026; NBS PHC 2022

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

3. EDUCATION, EQUALITY AND NATIONAL TALENT

Access to quality education represents the most powerful mechanism for breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Tanzania has achieved notable advances in school coverage — especially after the free basic education policy — but these coexist with deep inequities in quality, retention and development opportunities, especially for girls and rural communities.

- 77%: Adult literacy (World Bank, 2020/21)
- 73% / 83%: Women's / men's literacy (gender gap)
- 3.2 M: Children out of school (ages 7-17) (UNICEF 2024)
- 27%: Net secondary enrolment (UNICEF Tanzania 2024)

Source: UNICEF Tanzania Education 2024; World Bank Tanzania Data Blog 2023; UNWOMEN Gender Profile Tanzania 2024

The gender gap worsens at the school transition stage: 61% of girls between 14 and 19 years old do not attend school, compared to 51% of boys. Female dropout is directly associated with child marriage, teenage pregnancy, the absence of separate hygiene facilities in schools, and family economic pressure.

Learning quality is equally critical: data from the national primary school exam (2014) revealed that only 8% of second-grade students could read fluently and barely 8% had mastered basic arithmetic operations.

Talent and capabilities: State programmes to promote artistic, cultural and creative capabilities are practically confined to regional capitals and Dar es Salaam. Young people from rural villages lack access to practice spaces, training, instruments and institutional recognition, regardless of their individual capabilities.

Source: World Bank Gender Equity Tanzania 2019; UNICEF Education 2024; Maasai Education Foundation 2025; UNWOMEN 2024

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

4. BASIC NEEDS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation is the foundation of any human development model. In Tanzania, the gap between urban and rural areas in these indicators is dramatic and directly measurable in terms of infant mortality, morbidity and lost productive time, especially among women, who bear the responsibility of water collection in most rural communities.

- 60%: Safe water coverage in global rural areas (JMP WHO/UNICEF 2024)
- 83% vs. 60%: Urban vs. rural coverage (JMP WHO/UNICEF 2024)
- 11%: Rural households in Tanzania with improved sanitation (World Bank, 2018)
- 2.1 Bn: People without safely managed water (WHO/UNICEF 2025)

Source: WHO/UNICEF JMP Progress Report 2024-2025 (World Water Week 2025); World Bank Tanzania Poverty Assessment

Tanzania is among the sub-Saharan African countries with the greatest difficulty in meeting SDG 6 (water and sanitation for all by 2030). Only 3 African countries are currently on track to meet it, according to the WHO/UNICEF JMP. In rural areas, dependence on untreated surface water sources — lakes, rivers, ponds — generates a high incidence of waterborne diseases, with particular impact on children.

Source: PMC Rural Communities East Africa WASH 2025; UNICEF Tanzania WASH; IWA Publishing Northern Tanzania 2025

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

5. DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY

Tanzania has achieved 4G network coverage of 88% and 2G coverage of 98.1% at national level (TCRA data, December 2024). However, mere coverage is not equivalent to effective access: 22 million Tanzanians still depend on low-capacity 2G networks, 64% of users use basic phones without internet access, and the Digital Skills Gap Index 2021 places Tanzania at 13th of 26 African countries, with a score of 3.3 out of 10.

The urban-rural digital divide reproduces and amplifies all other inequalities: those without access to the digital world are excluded from the knowledge economy, distance education and talent-sharing platforms.

- 88%: National 4G coverage (TCRA Dec. 2024)
- 35.9%: Users with smartphone (TCRA Dec. 2024)
- 22 M: Users on 2G only (TCRA Dec. 2024)
- 3.3 / 10: Digital Skills Gap Index (Tanzania, 2021)

Source: TCRA Internet Report Q4 2024; TS2 Space Tanzania Internet Revolution 2025; TICGL 2024; The Guardian Tanzania Sept. 2024

The Government of Tanzania launched in July 2024 the Digital Economy Strategic Framework 2024-2034, whose central objective is to ensure that all Tanzanians — particularly those in rural and underserved areas — have reliable internet access. NGOs with territorial presence are the most effective channel for this objective to reach the communities furthest from urban centres.

Source: Tanzania Digital Economy Strategic Framework 2024-2034; TCRA 2024

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

6. SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF MWANZA

The Mwanza Region is the operating territory of Malaika Bridge Away Foundation and the context in which, in the most acute form, the shortcomings described at national level materialise. The data presented below detail the specific reality of its communities and directly underpin the need for intervention.

Census Data and Growth

The Mwanza Region occupies the southern shore of Lake Victoria — the largest lake in Africa and second largest in the world by surface area. With an area of 25,233 km², its size is comparable to North Macedonia. It is the second most populated region in Tanzania after Dar es Salaam, with 3,699,872 inhabitants according to the 2022 National Census. Its demographic growth rate — 3.0% annually — places it among the most dynamic regions in the country, with an increase of almost one million people between the 2012 and 2022 censuses (from 2,772,509 to 3,699,872 inhabitants).

- 3,699,872: Regional population, NBS Tanzania Census 2022
- 25,233 km²: Regional area (NBS Tanzania 2022)
- 3.0%: Annual growth (period 2002-2012)
- 1.45 M: City of Mwanza population (Macrotrends 2025)

Source: NBS Tanzania, 2022 PHC Initial Results; Mwanza Region Wikipedia; Macrotrends 2025

The city of Mwanza, the regional capital, concentrates most economic and administrative activity. However, the vast majority of the regional population is dispersed across the six districts — Illemela, Nyamagana (city), Magu, Sengerema, Ukerewe and Kwimba — and on the islands of Lake Victoria included in the region, such as Ukerewe island. These rural and island communities have the lowest levels of access to services in the entire region.

Source: NBS Tanzania 2022 PHC; Mwanza Region Wikipedia (consulted April 2026)

Poverty, Inequality and Vulnerability

The regional economy of Mwanza is sustained primarily by artisanal fishing on Lake Victoria, subsistence agriculture and small informal commerce. The regional GDP was 7,451,706 million TZS in 2016, with a per capita GDP of 2,004,353 TZS, well below the national average. The poverty rate in rural areas of the region exceeds the national average of 31% for rural areas, with pockets of severe poverty in the districts of Ukerewe, Kwimba and Sengerema.

The vulnerability is especially pronounced in certain population segments:

- Women and girls: Bear the greatest burdens of institutional discrimination. The SIGI (Social Institutions and Gender Index) records higher discrimination scores in rural areas (38) than in urban ones (32). About 2.5 million Tanzanian women live in regions with SIGI scores above 45.
- Children and youth: With over 45% of the population under 15 years old, the demand for educational and protection services far exceeds available supply. Female school dropout surges from age 12 due to child marriage, teenage pregnancy and absence of WASH facilities.
- Island and remote inland communities: Inhabitants of Ukerewe and other Lake Victoria islands, as well as the most remote villages of Sengerema and Kwimba, have practically zero access to specialised state services, healthcare, secondary education and digital connectivity.
- Young artists and creators: Creative talent exists in the villages, but lacks infrastructure, recognition and access to Tanzania's institutional cultural ecosystem, concentrated in Dar es Salaam.

Source: UN Women Tanzania Gender Profile 2024; MCC Tanzania Constraints Analysis 2024; NBS PHC 2022; Mwanza Region Wikipedia

Urban-Rural Divide in the Region

The city of Mwanza concentrates 41 hospitals, 103 health centres and the main secondary and higher education schools of the region (2022 Census data, NBS). In rural villages, reality is radically different: dispensaries are scarce and poorly equipped, primary schools frequently lack running water and sanitation facilities, and boarding secondary schools are economically and geographically inaccessible to most families.

The concentration of services in the regional capital is not only a problem of physical distance: it means that any administrative procedure, enrolment in training programmes, access to state cultural programmes or application for aid requires travel of hours or days from villages, with costs that most families cannot afford.

Source: NBS Tanzania 2022 PHC - hospitals and health centres data by region; World Bank Poverty Assessment

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

7. BASIC NEEDS IN MWANZA

The Mwanza Region, located along the shores of Lake Victoria, is one of Tanzania's most important economic and commercial centers. Despite the continued growth and development of Mwanza City, many rural and island communities across the region continue to face significant challenges in accessing basic services essential for health, education, dignity, and sustainable economic development.

Communities in districts such as Ukerewe, Kwimba, Magu, Sengerema, and other remote areas experience persistent shortages in clean water, sanitation facilities, quality education, healthcare services, and opportunities for youth development. These challenges disproportionately affect women, children, and vulnerable households, limiting their ability to achieve improved living standards and long-term prosperity.

Water and Sanitation

Access to safe drinking water remains one of the most urgent challenges facing rural and island communities in Mwanza Region. Women and girls bear the greatest burden, often spending several hours each day collecting water for household use.

In the absence of reliable water infrastructure such as piped water systems and pump-equipped wells, many families rely on untreated water from Lake Victoria, seasonal ponds, rivers, and shallow wells. The consumption of unsafe water contributes to recurring outbreaks of waterborne diseases, including cholera, typhoid fever, and diarrhoeal infections, particularly among children and other vulnerable populations.

During dry seasons, families frequently travel long distances to access water sources, reducing the time available for education, income-generating activities, and personal development. Girls are especially affected, as water collection responsibilities often interfere with school attendance and academic performance.

Water and sanitation challenges extend into educational institutions. Many rural schools lack adequate toilets, handwashing stations, and menstrual hygiene facilities. The absence of separate sanitation facilities for girls has been widely recognized as a significant contributor to absenteeism and school dropout among adolescent girls, particularly during puberty.

Evidence from similar interventions demonstrates that sustainable solutions are achievable. The drilling of artesian wells equipped with manual or solar-powered pumping systems, together with rainwater harvesting and storage systems, has proven to be both cost-effective and manageable by local communities. Comparable UNICEF-supported projects in the Kigoma Region benefited more than 140,000 people across 20 villages and significantly reduced infant morbidity associated with waterborne diseases.

Investments in water and sanitation infrastructure would improve public health outcomes, reduce preventable diseases, increase school attendance, particularly among girls, and create greater opportunities for economic productivity and community well-being.

Education Infrastructure and Learning Environment

Although Mwanza City hosts several major educational institutions, many rural schools continue to operate under challenging conditions. Overcrowded classrooms, shortages of desks and learning materials, inadequate sanitation facilities, and limited access to electricity and digital learning resources negatively affect the quality of education available to students.

In districts such as Kwimba and Magu, students often travel long distances on foot to attend school. During the rainy season, poor road conditions can further restrict access to education. In island communities such as Ukerewe,

transportation barriers create additional obstacles for students seeking secondary education, vocational training, and other learning opportunities.

Improving school infrastructure, expanding access to learning resources, and strengthening educational support services are essential for increasing educational outcomes and reducing inequalities between urban and rural communities.

Healthcare and Community Welfare

Access to healthcare services remains uneven across many parts of Mwanza Region. Residents of remote villages frequently depend on small dispensaries that face shortages of medicines, medical equipment, and qualified healthcare personnel.

Pregnant women, infants, children, and elderly individuals are particularly vulnerable where transportation to larger health facilities and district hospitals is difficult, expensive, or unavailable. Delayed access to healthcare often contributes to preventable illnesses and adverse health outcomes.

In addition, some communities continue to experience food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly among low-income households dependent on subsistence farming and small-scale fishing activities that are increasingly affected by climate variability and economic challenges.

Strengthening healthcare infrastructure, improving access to medical services, and supporting nutrition-focused interventions are critical components of sustainable community development.

Youth Development and Social Empowerment

Mwanza Region is home to a large population of talented and ambitious young people with potential in sports, arts, music, entrepreneurship, leadership, technology, and innovation. However, many rural communities lack the facilities and support systems needed to nurture and develop this potential.

Limited access to community centers, libraries, digital learning facilities, vocational training programs, and mentorship opportunities leaves many young people without pathways for personal and professional growth. As a result, some communities experience increased vulnerability to unemployment, early pregnancy, substance abuse, and social exclusion.

Investing in youth empowerment programs, skills development initiatives, entrepreneurship training, and community-based recreational facilities can help create opportunities for self-reliance, creativity, leadership, and long-term economic participation.

Need for Sustainable Community Intervention

The challenges facing rural and island communities in Mwanza Region highlight the continued need for sustainable, community-driven development initiatives. Effective interventions must address the interconnected issues of clean water access, sanitation, education, healthcare, gender equality, digital inclusion, economic opportunity, and youth empowerment.

Community-based organizations, development partners, government institutions, and non-governmental organizations play a critical role in supporting vulnerable populations and creating lasting positive change. Sustainable solutions should prioritize local participation, capacity building, environmental responsibility, and long-term community ownership.

Our Commitment

Malaika Bridge Away Foundation is committed to contributing to the development of vulnerable communities across Mwanza Region through practical, inclusive, and sustainable initiatives. The Foundation seeks to improve quality of life by supporting programs that enhance access to clean water and sanitation, strengthen education and healthcare services, promote gender equality, empower young people, and create opportunities for community advancement.

Through collaboration, innovation, and community engagement, Malaika Bridge Away Foundation strives to empower today's generation while building a stronger and more resilient future for tomorrow.

Source: UNICEF Tanzania WASH 2024; UNICEF Kigoma Project 2024; IWA Publishing WASH Tanzania 2025; PMC Rural Africa WASH 2025

Community Spaces and Infrastructure

Beyond water, the villages of Mwanza frequently lack adequate classrooms for learning, multi-purpose community spaces for training and cultural practice, passable roads during the rainy season and access to stable electricity. These shortcomings are not merely about comfort: they are direct obstacles to human development and community cohesion.

Source: World Bank SEQUIP 2020; NBS PHC 2022; BTI Tanzania 2026

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

8. EDUCATION, EQUALITY AND TALENT IN MWANZA

In the Mwanza Region, national gaps in education manifest with particular intensity. The combination of poverty, geographic distance, cultural norms and lack of infrastructure shapes a scenario in which access to quality education and individual talent development is structurally denied to broad segments of the population.

Inclusive Education and School Retention

- The secondary school enrolment rate in rural areas of Tanzania was 39.0% in the latest available measurement, compared to 67.0% in urban areas (World Bank, 2023), with rural Mwanza consistently below the average.
- Access to quality education outside the formal school system — vocational training, digital skills training, adult education — is practically non-existent in the region's villages.
- Young people who have dropped out of the system, adult women returning to study and people with disabilities have no accessible educational alternatives in their local area.
- Digital connectivity in rural educational centres in Mwanza is minimal or zero, despite 88% of the territory having 4G coverage: effective access requires devices and training that rural schools do not have.

Source: World Bank Tanzania Data Blog 2023; UNICEF Education Tanzania 2024; TCRA Q4 2024; BTI Tanzania 2026

Talent and Capabilities in the Villages

The rural communities of Mwanza harbour genuine creative talent — music, dance, visual arts, crafts, theatre — that remains without institutional recognition, without supporting infrastructure and without access to the Tanzanian state's cultural promotion markets and structures.

- State concentration of cultural resources: Theatres, arts schools, conservatories, galleries and artistic scholarship programmes are practically all located in Dar es Salaam and, to a lesser extent, in the regional capital. Village inhabitants have no physical or economic access to them.

- Absence of practice spaces: Without adequate facilities — rehearsal spaces, workshops, basic equipment — the development of individual talent is relegated to informal contexts with no possibility of professionalisation.
- Disconnection from the digital ecosystem: Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram or SoundCloud allow artists from around the world to distribute their work globally. The technological gap in Mwanza's villages prevents their creators from accessing these opportunities.
- Lack of cultural management training: Even when talent exists, the lack of knowledge about how to record, distribute and monetise artistic work prevents the consolidation of a local cultural economy.
- Exclusion of women artists: Patriarchal cultural restrictions in many rural communities particularly limit the public participation of women in the performing and visual arts.

Source: TCRA Q4 2024; TS2 Space 2025; UNWOMEN Tanzania 2024; BTI Tanzania 2026; TICGL 2024

The UN's 2030 Agenda and UNESCO's Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions recognise culture as a vector of sustainable development. Supporting the talent ecosystem in rural communities generates local employment, strengthens community identity and empowers young people and women, offering them dignified life alternatives to emigration, early marriage or informal work.

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

9. THE ROLE OF NGOS: FRAMEWORK AND LEGITIMACY

Tanzania has a well-established and legally recognised non-governmental organisation ecosystem, articulated around the Tanzania Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO), founded in 1988 and currently with more than 485 member organisations. Its mission is to maximise the qualitative and quantitative contribution of the NGO sector to the country's development, coordinating actions, avoiding duplication and representing the sector before the Government and international bodies.

Source: TANGO / Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)

NGOs: The Necessary Local Partner

The selection of the collaborating NGO in Tanzania follows a strict due diligence protocol: a minimum presence of 5 years in the territory, demonstrable alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), capacity for independent local auditing and a commitment to quarterly reporting through geolocated photographic evidence.

Key reasons for the necessity of NGOs:

- Territorial presence where the State does not reach: NGOs with local roots act directly where the public Administration lacks effective capacity due to budgetary, logistical or institutional reasons.
- Knowledge of context and community trust: Community embeddedness allows for the design of relevant and culturally sensitive interventions that government programmes fail to achieve.
- Flexibility and adaptability: Unlike state bureaucratic structures, NGOs quickly adapt their programmes to changing needs, incorporating lessons from the field.
- Catalysts for international aid: They act as legitimate and efficient channellers of donor funds, ensuring that aid reaches its destination, is executed transparently and generates verifiable impact.
- Gender perspective: NGOs are key actors in the fight against discrimination, child marriage and the exclusion of women, with programmes that the state apparatus cannot always address with the required sensitivity.
- Accountability: NGOs working with external funders are subject to transparency, auditing and impact evaluation standards that ensure the responsible use of resources.

Source: TANGO/GCAP; Tandfonline Aid Effectiveness Tanzania 2019; CODRA Mwanza; BTI Tanzania 2026

Verified sources: UN, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, NBS Tanzania

10. MALAIKA BRIDGE AWAY FOUNDATION

"Malaika" means Angel in Swahili. The name reflects the essential vocation of the Foundation: to be a bridge between global solidarity and the real needs of the communities of Mwanza. Empowering Today — Transforming Tomorrow.

Malaika Bridge Away Foundation acts as a non-governmental organisation specialised in the comprehensive support of vulnerable communities in the Mwanza Region across three interconnected priority areas. Its differential approach is the coherent articulation of these three pillars as an integrated system of sustainable human development.

BASIC NEEDS	EDUCATION & KNOWLEDGE	TALENT & CAPABILITIES
Water · Sanitation Dignified Spaces	Inclusive Education Gender Equality	Art · Culture Individual Capabilities

Source: Operational Planning Table, Malaika Bridge Away Foundation 2026

The Foundation's Differential Value:

- Precise geographic focus: Concentration in the Mwanza Region allows for deep knowledge of the territory, social fabric and local cultural dynamics, maximising the relevance and effectiveness of interventions.
- Integrated and intersectional approach: Without water there is no quality education; without education there is no talent development; without cultural expression there is no identity or community cohesion to sustain development.
- Cross-cutting gender perspective: All actions prioritise the inclusion of girls, young women and adult women in education, digital training and talent and capabilities programmes.
- Sustainability: Projects are designed to generate local capacities, training community leaders and building participatory management structures that persist beyond external aid.
- Transparency and accountability: Commitment to the highest standards of financial management, project monitoring and donor reporting.

11. CONCLUSIONS

The data presented in this document, drawn from international sources of the highest authority — United Nations, World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, UNFPA, NBS Tanzania, TCRA — paint an unequivocal picture: Tanzania, and in particular the Mwanza Region, presents structural human development needs that state mechanisms and direct aid flows to governments are not fully reaching in rural communities.

- NGOs are necessary because they act where state systems do not reach, with territorial knowledge, flexibility and a people-centred approach.
- The Mwanza Region concentrates verified and urgent needs in water, education, gender gap and cultural access, across a population of 3.7 million people with a demographic growth rate of 3% annually.
- Malaika Bridge Away Foundation responds to these needs with an integrated, sustainable and gender-sensitive model, across the three pillars of greatest impact on long-term human development.

Your support as a donor, volunteer or institutional ally is the piece that completes the bridge between the resources available in the world and the communities that need them most in Mwanza.

If you wish to support Malaika Bridge Away Foundation's projects, contribute with a donation, an institutional alliance or your time as a volunteer, you are helping water reach homes that never had it, a girl being able to go to school, a woman being able to develop her capabilities and knowledge in equality, a young artist from a village on the shores of Lake Victoria being able to show her talent to the world. Every action counts. Every resource matters. Malaika Bridge Away. The bridge between worlds.

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Document prepared using data from international public reference sources. All statistical data come from official bodies and peer-reviewed academic publications. Compiled: May 2026.