



Strengthening legal framework for Consumer Protection in Tanzania's Trade Policy

For a Just and Equitable Society



A. Introduction

The National Trade Policy, first adopted in 2003, was revised in 2023 to address evolving trade dynamics. While the earlier framework led to some gains, including an increase in export value from \$ 83.5 million in 2003 to \$ 1.4 billion in 2023, it faced persistent challenges, including regulatory gaps and inadequate sectoral coordination, (National Trade Policy, 2023 Edition) . The 2023 revision aims to drive export-led industrial growth. The Policy is backed by a 10-Year Implementation Strategy (2023–2033) with clear and time-bound commitments.

B. Objective

This policy brief, by the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), proposes actionable measures to accelerate implementation of consumer protection commitments within the National Trade Policy framework.



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C. Consumer Protection in the National Trade Policy Framework

Although Tanzania lacks a dedicated consumer protection policy, the 2023 **National Trade Policy** identifies consumer welfare as integral to trade efficiency. *Specific Objective vi* commits the government to promoting fair trade and strengthening consumer protection frameworks. The implementation strategy (Item No. 6) outlines measures aimed at creating competitive, and well-regulated markets that enhance product quality and affordability.

D. Progress and Gaps in Implementation

Commitments under Item No. 6	Target Timeline	Status	Remarks
Review of Fair Competition Laws and Regulations	By 2025	Partly Achieved	The 2024 Fair Competition (Amendment) Act expanded FCC's role in handling consumer complaints. However, the enabling Consumer Complaints Handling Procedures remain outdated and misaligned
Enactment of the Trade Remedies Act	By 2025	Not Achieved	The absence of this Act limits Tanzania's ability to address unfair trade practices that harm both businesses and consumers
Operationalization of the National Consumer Advocacy Council	By 2026	Within Time-lines	With the deadline approaching, groundwork, particularly legal, institutional, and financial arrangements, should be fast-tracked



E. Emerging Policy Issues

1. Delays in updating Consumer Complaints Handling Procedures weakens FCC's ability to effectively deliver on its expanded mandate.

2. Absence of the Trade Remedies Act limits Tanzania's capacity to respond to distortive trade practices, affecting both traders and consumers.

3. Slow progress on operationalizing the Consumer Advocacy Council risks to delay consumer engagement and advocacy mechanisms.

4. Missed timelines risks strategy credibility and slows the momentum for broader trade

F. Recommended Actions

1. FCC should review and update Consumer Complaints Handling Procedures to align with its extended mandate of addressing daily consumer complaints.

2. Government should expedite the drafting and tabling of the Trade Remedies Bill to meet the 2025 commitment.

3. The Ministry of Trade and Industries should fast-track institutional groundwork for the Consumer Advocacy Council to meet the 2026 target.



G. Conclusion

Consumer protection is a defined policy objective within Tanzania's trade policy framework. As implementation deadlines pass or near, it is important to sustain focus on delivery. Progress in this area will be key to promoting market fairness, protecting public interest, and maintaining momentum in the trade reform agenda.

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