



BUSINESS FOCUS

"PROMOTING A CONDUCTIVE BUSINESS REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT"

Issue No. 9

September 2024

Stakeholders in Chipata District



DIALOGUE KEY TO A SUPPORTIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The BRRRA has emphasized that meaningful dialogue between the private sector, public bodies and regulatory agencies is essential in creating business-friendly regulatory frameworks.



Stakeholders in Kabwe District

businesses whether micro, small, medium or large by reducing bureaucratic barriers and ensuring consistent regulation enforcement.

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BRRRA Executive Director Sharon Sichilongo stated that regulatory reforms, which balance enforcement with creating a conducive business environment, were necessary for job creation and long-term business sustainability.

Mrs. Sichilongo stressed that through dialogue, the agency ensures that regulatory reforms create a level playing field for all

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BRRRA Executive Director Sharon Sichilongo



Stakeholders in Choma District

She further said dialogue fosters collaborations that help the agency achieve its mandate and extend its reach to a broader section of society.

Collaborations such as the one

with the USAID Business Enabling Project, have allowed the agency to conduct sensitization workshops in various regions, fostering a more collaborative approach to regulatory reforms.

With Support from the project, the Agency has been able to hold awareness and sensitisation workshops in Kabwe, Chipata and Choma.

ENHANCED RESPONSIBILITY FOR RIA TEAMS IN MINISTRIES

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) teams within line Ministries have been urged to take their roles seriously, as they are integral to the process of revising policies and laws. These teams are responsible for conducting RIAs on proposed regulatory frameworks, ensuring that policies and laws are both effective and efficient.

Speaking at a recent capacity-building training for RIA teams, Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRRA) Director for Regulatory Affairs David Frank Banda emphasized the critical role RIA team members play in shaping policy and spearheading legislative processes for both Ministries and the statutory bodies under their ministries.



BRRRA Director Regulatory Affairs, David Frank Banda

Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) teams within line Ministries play a critical role in shaping policy and driving legislative processes, ensuring that proposed policies and laws are both effective and efficient.”
– David Frank Banda, BRRRA Director for Regulatory Affairs

Banda stressed the importance of the training, noting that any knowledge gaps in conducting RIAs directly affected the quality

of reports submitted to the BRRRA. Poor-quality RIA reports lead to delays in the legislative process, as they necessitate multiple rounds of

revisions to ensure all critical regulatory aspects are addressed.

He pointed out that most delays in clearing policy and regulatory proposals are due to back-and-forth communications between the BRRA and Ministries which are aimed at ensuring all key aspects

of the proposed regulations have been thoroughly considered.

Section 6 of the Business Regulatory Act No. 3 of 2014 provides that public bodies must conduct a Regulatory Impact Assessment when proposing policies or laws for regulating business activities.

The training, held in Lusaka from September 10th – 12th, 2024, is the second conducted by BRRA for government ministries. In 2020, the Agency established RIA teams, training four officers from 21 Government Ministries to integrate RIA into policy and legislative processes.



Participants during the capacity building training for RIA teams



RIA team during a plenary session

PRIVATE SECTOR ACKNOWLEDGES BRRA'S CRUCIAL ROLE IN BUSINESS GROWTH

The private sector has commended the Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRA) for its pivotal role in driving business growth and sustainability in Zambia.

Petauke Chamber of Commerce and Trade, Vice President Donald Sakala said BRRA's mandate of ensuring an efficient, cost-effective and accessible business licensing system is crucial for private sector development.

Mr. Sakala urged the private sector to fully support BRRA's efforts by adopting a mindset shift that reduces bureaucratic hurdles, enabling businesses to grow and thrive.

Speaking at a BRRA awareness and sensitization workshop in Chipata, sponsored by the USAID Business

Enabling Project, Mr. Sakala encouraged public bodies and regulatory agencies to continuously review frameworks that impede business growth.

He lauded BRRA for providing a platform where private sector concerns are addressed, allowing for better collaboration and understanding of regulatory needs.

The workshop included participants from the Eastern, Chipata and Petauke chambers of commerce, Chipata City Council, business associations, government ministries and the media.



Petauke Chamber of Commerce and Trade, Vice President Donald Sakala

LOBITO CORRIDOR PROJECT TO SUPPORT SINGLE LICENSING SYSTEMS



BRRRA Director, Business Facilitation David S. Banda (second from left) BRRRA Manager, Regulatory Services and Licensing Systems Joel Mumba (second from right) MCTI Senior Technical Regulations Officer Pamela Lubasi (far left) and BRRRA Intern Abel Simutami (right)

Government is accelerating the implementation of a Single Licensing System, which is expected to streamline licensing procedures and simplify compliance for businesses. This initiative will be realized through the development of an electronic platform, which is seen as a game changer for improving efficiency and reducing costs.

The Lobito Corridor Trade Facilitation (LCTF) Project has committed to support the single licensing system for business along the corridor. A pilot single licensing system for the tourism sector was launched in November 2022.

The Single Licensing System will streamline compliance and reduce costs for businesses, transforming efficiency through a centralized electronic platform,” said David Simon Banda, BRRRA Director for Business Facilitation.

The Business Regulatory Review Agency (BRRRA) Director for Business Facilitation David Simon Banda emphasized that the platform will address challenges encountered during the tourism sector pilot. He also highlighted that financial support for the system’s development has been secured through the LCTF Project under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry.

The single licensing system, established under the Business Regulatory Act No. 3 of 2014, aims to central-



Stakeholders during the development of TORS for consultancy services for designing and developing the electronic platform for the single licensing system

ize compliance with various regulatory requirements for businesses through a single regulatory point.

Stakeholders for the development of terms of references for consultancy services for designing and developing the electronic platform for the single licensing system were drawn from the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry,

Patents and Companies Registration Agency, SMART Zambia, Zambia Development Agency and Zambia Revenue Authority.

The BRRRA through the LCTF Project will soon engage a consultant for designing and developing the electronic platform for the single licensing system to support businesses along the Lobito Corridor.

BUSINESSES STRUGGLE AMID DROUGHT AND BURDENSOME REGULATIONS



BRRRA Executive Director Sharon Sichilongo (standing) with BRRRA staff and stakeholders in Mambwe District

A recent review of the business regulatory environment by BRRRA in Eastern Province has revealed that many businesses are struggling to stay afloat due to challenges such as drought-induced power load shedding and excessive regulatory burdens.

Local businesses, including barbershops and salons, reported difficulties in covering operational costs, exacerbated by long hours of power outages and high fees for levies imposed by local authorities.

A recent review of the business regulatory environment revealed that businesses are facing significant challenges, including high operational costs due to prolonged power outages and burdensome fees

Business owners in Lwanga, Chadiza, and Mambwe called for the consolidation of business levies, fire certificates and health permits into a single, more affordable certificate to ease compliance and reduce costs.

Responding to these concerns, BRRRA's Executive Director, Sharon Sichilongo, assured business owners that reforms were underway to simplify regulatory requirements in different sectors.

Mrs. Sichilongo added that the

Agency was part of a technical working group exploring the feasibility of merging the three certificates, with the goal of streamlining processes and alleviating financial pressure on businesses.

These efforts, she emphasized, reflected BRRRA's commitment to improving the business regulatory environment, ensuring businesses operate more efficiently and cost-effectively across the country.



Some business owners in Lwangwa District



Stakeholders in Chadiza District

DID YOU KNOW? CORNER

The Business Regulatory Review Agency has eleven functions as outlined in Section 14 of the Business Regulatory (Amendment) Act No. 14 of 2018. The fifth function is to approve regulatory frameworks submitted under the Act.

Contributors

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