

# CATEGORY WORKFORCE NUTRITION



## CATEGORY CONTEXT

Improving nutrition in the workplace—where 58% of the global population spend at least one-third of their adult lives—has been identified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as one of several key strategies to address the global malnutrition crisis.<sup>1</sup> The benefits to businesses are clear, with studies estimating returns on investment (ROI) for workforce nutrition programmes to be as high as 6:1.<sup>1</sup> As a result, such programmes are gaining increasing traction in the private sector, particularly those focusing on direct employees.<sup>2</sup>

According to Chatham House research, 9.6% of Tanzania's workforce was underweight and 5.4% was affected by obesity in 2020.<sup>3</sup> The cognitive and physical impacts of these conditions have been found to reduce workforce productivity through presenteeism and absenteeism. The economic cost of this was estimated at 1.55% of Tanzania's GDP—approximately USD 1 billion in 2025.<sup>3-5</sup> Enhancing workforce health will therefore have a positive impact on companies' financial returns and economic wellbeing over the long term.<sup>6</sup>

## FINDINGS

Of the 10 companies assessed, only two—Coca-Cola and PepsiCo—were found to provide workers with workforce nutrition activities at the global or regional level. However, both companies indicated to ATNi that they either have no direct presence or only a minimal presence in Tanzania, meaning that these activities are not implemented in the Tanzania market. It is also unclear whether their workforce nutrition activities extend to employees in their supply or distribution chains in the country.

Some companies indicated to ATNi that they have activities to support workers or farmers in their supply chains. However, no evidence was found in the public domain that the Tanzania-headquartered food and beverage (F&B) companies assessed have formal policies or programmes to support workforce nutrition. This includes providing employees with healthy food at work, nutrition education, nutrition-focused health-checks, and breastfeeding support beyond mandatory parental leave.

TABLE 1  
POLICY LANDSCAPE

National Policy or Regulation	Summary
National Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan 2021/22 - 2025/26	Outlines priority actions to “strengthen nutrition interventions at formal workplaces,” including scoping current workforce nutrition interventions, developing ‘nutrition packages’ for workplaces, and advocating for employers to implement these packages. Calls for private sector actors to engage in implementing of nutrition interventions at least once per year. <sup>7</sup>
Employment and Labour Relations Act 2019	Stipulates a minimum of 84 days (12 weeks) paid maternity leave (or 100 days (14 weeks) if giving birth to more than one child at the same time). Requires employers to grant employees up to four terms of maternity leave, and at least three days of paid paternity leave within seven days of their child's birth. <sup>8</sup>
Nutrition Workforce Handbook	In 2022, the SUN Business Network (SBN), in collaboration with GAIN and Eat Well Global, and with the support of the Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre, launched a practical guide to providing healthy meals and snacks in the workplace. <sup>9</sup> It is being piloted by two SBN member companies. <sup>9</sup>

## KEY INDUSTRY RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure that F&B companies invest in employees' nutritional health in Tanzania, companies are encouraged to:

- Develop a comprehensive workforce nutrition program for all employees in Tanzania (including at manufacturing sites, and where possible, in supply and distribution chains), which includes 1) Healthy food at work; 2) Nutrition education; 3) Nutrition-focused health checks; and 4) Breastfeeding support and parental leave.
- Set and publicly report against outcome-focused targets or key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure progress on implementing the program in Tanzania.

### BOX 1 EVIDENCE OF WORKFORCE NUTRITION PROGRAMMES IN TANZANIA

**One of the companies leading on workforce nutrition in Tanzania is coffee production company Aviv Tanzania, a subsidiary of Olam Food Ingredients (OFI). In 2023, the company collaborated with the Workforce Nutrition Alliance and, with support from district medical offices, district nutritionists, and a local NGO, launched a programme providing nutrition education, nutrition-related health checks, and breastfeeding support.<sup>10</sup>**

**By 2024, only 4-14% of the 3,500 workers employed during peak season had participated in the programme. While still limited, this represents a positive first step for companies implementing workforce nutrition programmes in the Tanzanian market.<sup>10</sup>**

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Tanzania has regulations that mandate specific aspects of workforce nutrition programmes, including breastfeeding support. However, policymakers are encouraged to use the findings of this research to help develop a roadmap for industry and policymakers of policy measures to expand the current regulatory landscape to cover all elements of workforce nutrition programmes.



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