Policy Plan TRAIDE Foundation

2025 – 2029

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1. Introduction

The TRAIDE Foundation was founded in 2020 and has operational teams in The Netherlands, Ethiopia, Burundi, and Rwanda. Our work is built around the notion that private sector-led development fuels sustainable and inclusive growth in emerging economies. In these countries, progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remains limited and countries continue to face numerous development challenges. We see that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government efforts cannot address these challenges alone. The private sector holds the potential to provide sustainable solutions that can significantly impact complex development issues.

Despite the potential of private sector solutions, engaging in challenging contexts often proves discouraging for businesses. This is where the TRAIDE Foundation steps in. Our approach involves series of activities that aim to support, form, and guide private sector initiatives, enabling them to effectively contribute to local challenges. At the same time, we work on building local capacity and enhance business environments, to match and facilitate companies and investors to existing opportunities and challenges that could be addressed through private sector solutions. Our goal is to showcase the potential of emerging markets to entrepreneurs, facilitate their investments, and guide them in making their endeavours not only successful but also sustainable. As such, we empower the private sector to develop sustainable solutions for local development challenges.

The TRAIDE foundation aims to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a particular focus on decent work and economic growth and partnership (SDGs 8 and 17). We approach our work thematically and are therefore actively seeking to include additional SDGs whenever opportunities for private sector engagement emerge (e.g., SDG 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12 and 13). We are active in different sectors such as agriculture, renewable energy, health, digitalisation, circularity, waste management, and water.

This document is the policy plan of the TRAIDE Foundation (Stichting TRAIDE) and covers the period 1 January 2025 – 31 December 2029. It provides more information on our mission and vision, planned activities and organizational structure. Our results from the past years and other relevant financial overviews and documents, can be found on our website: www.traide.org. In addition to our overarching goals, each country team and program has separate annual plans, in close collaboration with our donors.

Currently, the TRAIDE Foundation is implementing two trade facilitation programs in Rwanda and Burundi. The program in Rwanda is commissioned by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO), whilst the program in Burundi is commissioned by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ethiopia. We are also in the second year of a 2-year program under the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature. We are exploring ways to expand our work and find alternative funding sources for the establishment of more local offices in African countries, thereby expanding our impact and mandate (e.g. via EU funding).

2. Our Mission & Vision

As previously mentioned, we believe that the private sector can play a key role in offering sustainable solutions for development challenges, ranging from socio-economic disparities to environmental issues. While many development challenges can be solved through the public sector and/or non-governmental organizations, some challenges must be solved through the private sector. At the same time, we see that the private sector in low income countries require support in building business cases, forming partnership and accessing funding to start operations and creating impact. As these actors lack the finances, business development skills and experience that is required to build sustainable business cases. In conclusion, there is a huge need to involve the private sector to play a larger role in the sustainable development of emerging markets.

Our work is guided by our vision: the sustainable development of emerging countries is accelerated by private-sector solutions. A vision that is closely aligned to our mission: to empower the private sector to develop sustainable solutions for local development challenges.

Our mission and vision are underpinned by the believe that, despite the complexities of the challenges faced, the private sector has the capability to provide innovative and sustainable solutions. With our work, we aim to support and empower them to do so.

Although each TRAIDE program and office has their own annual plans and projects based on the local context and stakeholders, demand, and donor requirements, they all follow the lines of the TRAIDE approach. Our methodology can be summarized as a series of activities that are needed to develop sustainable solutions, following three steps; Diagnose, Develop and Empower.

1. Assess – We identify local development challenges and map them against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This diagnostic process uncovers both pressing needs and potential business opportunities.
2. Build – We connect private sector actors to these opportunities, support the creation of viable business models, build strategic partnerships, and provide the tools, knowledge, and resources needed to deliver sustainable solutions.
3. Grow – We strengthen and scale initiatives by facilitating partnerships, and addressing systemic barriers that hinder success, ensuring that solutions achieve lasting impact.

3. Anticipated Topics & Activities

In the years ahead, the Foundation's key areas of focus revolve around the following topics: 1) Implementation and quality control of our country programs, 2) Expansion to new countries, 3) Professionalization of the organization, and 4) Professionalization of our finances. Below, we will discuss specific activities related to each of these topics.

1. Implementation and quality control country programs
Although each TRAIDE program and office has its own annual plans based on local context and relevant stakeholders, demand and donor requirements, they all follow the lines of the TRAIDE methodology. Since the start of the pilot TRAIDE program in Rwanda (October 2022), there is an increased focus on implementing an effective learning agenda and improve our MERL systems within TRAIDE. This does not only support our country teams to implement lessons learned and improve local programs, but it also feeds into our general learnings of the Foundation and supports in ensuring high quality programs within the Foundation. Our updated learning agenda is vital in constantly improving our methodology, which feeds into the set-up, improvement, and implementation of new programs.

In addition to an advanced learning agenda, we aim to extend our role as facilitator of new and impactful private sector-led projects in the coming years. An example where the Foundation already plays such a role is within the partners in pellets project (https://www.partnersinpellets.org). This project aims to develop the Rwandan market and ecosystem for pellets in combination with a clean gasifier stove. This partnership project is a product of TRAIDE efforts in the energy sector. The project is implemented by five partners and financed by RVO Impact Cluster financing. The TRAIDE Foundation is coordinator of the project. Building on our knowledge and expertise derived from the Partners in Pellets project, we aim to facilitate similar consortia in our countries of operations. It is our goal to work less generic and more targeted by focusing on bringing together groups of companies and other stakeholders around specific development issues or business opportunities. Currently, we are working on potential new partnership programs in the water sector, digitalization and agriculture sectors in both Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia.

2. Expansion to new countries
In the coming years, we aim to expand our work by implementing more TRAIDE related activities in various African countries, thereby increasing our impact and mandate. There are already scoping missions ongoing, to assess which countries could benefit from a dedicated TRAIDE program. Having multiple programs would increase the successes and effectiveness of individual programs too, as we can organize regional activities and combine efforts on the Dutch side (e.g., offer potential partners more knowledge and opportunities across different countries). This would, however, require improved organisational governance (see the following point). In addition to the expansion of TRAIDE programs, the Foundation will expand collaboration with other donors and financiers to diversify our income streams. See also the fourth topic below.

3. Professionalization of the Foundation
The TRAIDE Foundation was founded in 2020, and over the past 5 years we have established our foundational structure, however we keep on working on growth and organizational improvements. Over the upcoming years, we will undertake internal improvements aimed towards becoming a more professional organization, benefiting both our employees, donors, and partners.

The following activities will be put in place, or already commenced:

- *Implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):* We are in the process of updating our standardized operating procedures (SOPs) – especially regarding our updated TRAIDE Methodology - to ensure the effectiveness and high quality of our activities and processes.
- *Improve Employment Practices:* As part of our commitment to becoming a better employer, we are actively improving our HR processes. We have established salary scales, standardized employment contracts and onboarding processes, and the provision of additional employee benefits, and we are incorporating fixed performance and training structures
- *Trainings* – In line with our TRAIDE methodology our employees will be trained on certain key elements, such as standardisation of project management, business development, and stakeholder management.

4. Professionalization of our finances:

In addition to our efforts to professionalize the Foundation as an organisation; we are committed to implement substantial enhancements to our financial and administrative operations too. Our objective is twofold: to increase our revenue to 2.5 million euros and maintain a robust reserve that can consistently cover two months' worth of salaries. In addition, other activities that will be worked on include:

- *Explore Possibilities of Core Funding:* The Foundation is exploring opportunities to receive core funding for our organizational operations and country programs. This would catalyze our growth as we could extend our presence to multiple countries at once. Doing so will stimulate regional exchanges, cross-learnings, and operational efficiency throughout the Foundation by consolidating resources. As such, we can engage in more extensive and comprehensive initiatives which will significantly increase our impact and reach.
- *Diversify Income Streams:* Currently, all our programs in Ethiopia, Burundi and Rwanda rely on funding from the Dutch government, making the Foundation somewhat dependent on subsidies. We have already launched efforts to diversify our income streams, which will be expanded and integrated across all our programs in the years ahead. For example, we enable contributions from private sector parties with whom we work and secondly, we secure financing for (sub-)projects from a broader range of financiers or donors. For example, we already implemented projects that were funded through a corporate foundation and/or other (non-Dutch) development partners. For general TRAIDE expansion we are in discussion with the EU for some countries.
- *Set up sound financial management:* We will continue with our dedicated financial officer or outsource financial management to ensure the financial health and sustainability of the Foundation. This organisation should be able to provide strategic financial leadership and will be responsible for effective financial management and to implement a better and more transparent procurement strategy for the Foundation.

4. General Information

General information:

Registered Name	Stichting TRAIDE
Chamber of Commerce registration number	80547745
RSIN number	861711014
International Bank Account Number (IBAN)	NL 90 TRIO 0320 4035 80
Email Address	info@traide.org
Phone Number	+31 6 24 32 83 55
Post Address	Bevrijdingsstraat 38, 6703 AA Wageningen

Board and Supervisory Board:

We established a board and a supervisory board, with all board members serving in a voluntary capacity. These dedicated individuals generously contribute their time and expertise to the Foundation. Although board members can reimburse travel expenses and/or other expenses that were necessary to perform their duties, there are currently no fees, allowances, or salaries in place for board positions. There is a board policy in place that dives deeper into topics such as board composition and structure, board meetings, responsibilities, code of conduct and ethics. This policy reflects our commitment to facilitate a collaborative and mission-driven environment where their guidance and insights play a crucial role in shaping our Foundation's success.

The Board:

Name board member	*Position*
Wouter Beekman	Chairman
Janwillem Liebrand	Secretary
Timon Weitkamp	Treasurer

The Supervisory Board:

In addition to the Board, the Foundation has a supervisory board. The supervisory board consists of experienced members with relevant backgrounds and networks, that don't have formal responsibilities within the day-to-day management of the foundation but play a key advising role in relation to our mission, vision, and activities. At this moment, our supervisory board consists of Marjon Reiziger, Josephine Damstra, and Norbert van der Straaten.

Organogram:

At the time of writing, the TRAIDE Foundation has 10 employees employed via our Dutch entity, totalling 9.2 fte's. In addition, the Foundation has 5 employees working on our programs via local (non-Dutch) contracts. The Foundation does not have a CAO (collective labour agreement) but uses the CAO of the Netherlands Government.

The following organogram is in place:

Organizational Chart TRAIDE Foundation, 2025