



Government  
of Ireland  
International  
Development  
Programme



# Call for Abstracts and Presentations

## Build It International and TEVETA

**Research Seminar.** *Building Bridges between Research and Practice: Exploring the concepts of Gender, Construction and Skills Development in Zambia*

**23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

**Lusaka, Zambia**

### Introduction

Despite growing interest in gender-responsive TEVET and construction programming in Zambia, a persistent gap remains between available research and its practical application in policy, training systems, and industry practice. Global, regional and local evidence on gender, skills development, and construction is often fragmented, highly technical, or insufficiently translated into actionable guidance for implementers, regulators, and training institutions, limiting its uptake in programme design and policy reform. Addressing this gap is critical to ensuring that emerging evidence meaningfully influences inclusive skills pathways, procurement practices, and workforce participation, particularly for women.

Build It International (BII) and the Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority (TEVETA) have worked collaboratively to strengthen evidence generation and learning within the TEVET sector. To expand knowledge-sharing and identify practical solutions, the two institutions will convene a Research Seminar bringing together researchers, practitioners, institutions, and policymakers to build stronger links between research and practice.

### Themes

On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026, BII and TEVETA will host a Research Seminar with the theme *“Building Bridges between Research and Practice: Exploring Gender, Construction and Skills Development in Zambia.”* The Seminar will take an action-based approach and make intentional efforts to translate data and evidence into actionable solutions that can

influence policy and practice. The Seminar calls upon researchers and practitioners to present abstracts, concepts and programmes that explore the three thematic focus areas:

### **Sub-theme 1: Gendered Pathways into Skills and Trades**

This sub-theme examines how women and men enter, navigate, and progress through formal TEVET and informal skills pathways, with a focus on access to training and employment in male-dominated sectors, and especially construction. It explores the social, institutional, economic, and political factors shaping gendered participation, including historical norms, affirmative action policies, and the role of male allies and champions. The sub-theme also considers evidence on productivity, financing, and targeted interventions that enable women's entry, retention, and progression in skills and trades.

Potential areas of focus include:

- Entry, retention and progression across TEVET, informal training pathways and into employment, with a special focus on women in male-dominated environments
- Social, institutional, and economic factors that shape women's and men's entry into skills and trades
- Opportunities and interventions for gender equality in male-dominated sectors – enablers for female entry and progression
- The role of male allies and male champions
- The political context of gendered roles in skills and trades
- Gender and productivity - the impact of female participation in male-dominated sectors
- Financing and resourcing mechanisms for women in male-dominated sectors

### **Sub-theme 2: Gender and the Delivery of Inclusive Infrastructure**

This sub-theme explores how gender dynamics and skills development influences who participates in, benefits from, and delivers inclusive infrastructure projects. It examines procurement and contractor practices, affirmative action policies, skills demand and gaps, and how historical gender roles shape women's participation.

Potential areas of focus include:

- The current position and condition of women contractors in Zambia
- The effect of gender inclusive procurement practices and affirmative action policies (e.g. preference and reservation schemes) on women and/ or the industry
- Historical and traditional gendered roles in community infrastructure (i.e. the traditional role of women in building homes)
- The gendered nature of green infrastructure initiatives, and especially related to the use of women's indigenous knowledge (e.g. earthen homes)
- Skills in demand and skills gaps in infrastructure projects
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning for gender outcomes in infrastructure delivery

### **Sub-theme 3: Translating Evidence into Practice and Policy**

This sub-theme focuses on how research on gender, construction, and skills can be effectively translated into practical programming and policy decisions. It examines the accessibility and use of evidence, highlights examples of evidence-based decision-

making, and identifies key data gaps and opportunities for improved policy, financing, and coordination. The below areas focus on the themes of the research seminar. Potential areas of focus include:

- Accessibility of research to practitioners and policymakers
- Examples of evidence-based decision-making in programming and policy
- Strategies for scaling and institutionalising successful pilot interventions
- Mechanisms for sustained researcher-practitioner-policymaker collaboration
- Knowledge and data gaps
- Opportunities in policy, practice, financing, and coordination e.g. capacity building needs.

## Submission Guidelines

Please submit Proposals (max. 500 words) under any of the outlined sub-themes to:

- **Build It International Data Team**, [biidata@builditinternational.org](mailto:biidata@builditinternational.org) and copy **TEVETA Abstracts** [abstracts.2026RS@teveta.org.zm](mailto:abstracts.2026RS@teveta.org.zm).

For any submission enquiries, contact Research Specialist, Build It International: Sarah Meath-Mulenga [sarahm-mulenga@builditinternational.org](mailto:sarahm-mulenga@builditinternational.org)

The Proposals should be submitted in PDF format and include: Title, Author/Organisation / Institution, Background, Objectives, Methodology / Delivery, Findings and Actionable Recommendations. The Proposal should align with the overall seminar theme and clearly reference the sub-theme. The evaluation criteria for shortlisted proposals includes:

- Relevance of proposal to the conference
- Coherence of the methodology and findings/ results
- Originality
- Quality of writing

The Research Seminar accepts various presentation modalities, including:

- Oral presentation (15 minutes)
- Demonstrations/ showcases of practical applications of research, tools (15 minutes)
- Poster presentations (Visual presentation)
- Lightening talk (5 – 7 minutes)

Proposals should state the preferred delivery modality, however, the final presentation type will be guided by the judging panel.

## Key Deadlines

The below are key deadlines for this Call:

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| Close: Call for Abstracts and Presentations | Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup> March, 23.00hrs |
| Shortlisted Abstracts are selected          | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2026             |
| Presenters send final Presentation          | 16 <sup>th</sup> April 2026             |
| Research seminar                            | 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2026             |