



EVENTS

CUTS and COMESA Sign MoU

CUTS Lusaka has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) on October 04, 2017 at the COMESA Secretariat in Lusaka, Zambia. The MoU will enable two organisations to cooperate and complement each other



in protection of consumers and customers. COMESA Secretary General Sindiso Ngwenya and CUTS Zambia Board Chairperson Yusuf Dodia signed the pact on behalf of their respective organisations. The objective of the MoU is to foster closer links in promoting and strengthening trade and development, competition

and regulation, agricultural research, climate change, food security and poverty reduction and development in the Eastern Africa region.

World Competition Day

CUTS Accra has urged the Government of Ghana and the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI) to make Competition Regime a legislative priority for 2018. Appiah Kusi Adomako, Country Coordinator of CUTS Accra, Ghana made the call at a Policy Dialogue to mark 'World Competition Day' on December 05, 2017 in Accra, Ghana. He urged businesses and the private sector to work



<http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/media-center/news/4256-consumer-unity-and-trust-society-cuts-ghana-commemorates-world-competition-antitrust-day-2017>

IN THIS ISSUE

Events	1
Ongoing Projects	2
Forthcoming Events	3
New Initiatives	3
Publications	4
Representations	5
Reflections from Media	5

closely together to ensure the development of a competition policy and the passage of a competition law for Ghana. The Board Chairman, CUTS Ghana and Chairman for the occasion, Professor Justice Samuel Date-Bah noted that businesses and consumers in Ghana continued to suffer largely due to the absence of a functional competition regime in the country.

EVENTS

Validation of the Draft Green Energy Policy

CUTS Nairobi, Kenya in collaboration with the Technical Committee organised the first meeting for validation of the draft Green Energy Policy for Bomet County on December 13, 2017. The Policy presents the steps taken by Bomet County to enhance its energy security. The objective of this Policy is to facilitate provision of adequate, affordable, and sustainable energy. The Policy highlights the priority areas and interventions that the county government of Bomet intends to implement to catalyse access to green energy solutions to support socio-economic development.



Outreach and Awareness Creation on Social-Economic Benefits of RE



CUTS Nairobi, Kenya held two outreach and awareness creation workshops in Homa-Bay and Bomet Counties. These activities were meant to reach out to the community and inform them of the social and economic benefits of embracing Renewable Energy (RE) technologies, and mobilising them to exert pressure on the respective county governments

to enact laws, put in place policies/programmes and implement county plans to promote the uptake of quality and affordable RE technologies. Focus was also placed on building partnerships with relevant stakeholders to create a strong consumer energy forum at the county level.

Public Forum on Milk Safety and Milk Loss Reduction

CUTS Nairobi in Partnership SNV Netherlands held a public forum meeting under the Voice for Change Partnership, Food Nutrition and Security (V4CP- FNS) on October 12, 2017. The forum brought together consumers and policymakers from the Ministry of Health and Kenya Dairy Board to deliberate on milk safety issues. The objective of the meeting was to raise awareness on milk safety issues and gather public opinion on the same.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Agricultural Commodity Management in Zambia

CUTS Lusaka, Zambia is working with Zambia Advocacy Programme (ZAP) by undertaking a study to aid the enhancement of Zambia Commodity Exchange (ZAMACE) in the agricultural sector. The study would consequently help in the enhancement of the work that ZAMACE is already doing in the agricultural sector.

Post Advocacy of COMPAD I

CUTS Accra, Ghana with funding support from the Business Sector and Challenge Fund (BUSAC Fund) is implementing a project in Ghana called 'Post Advocacy of COMPAD I'. The aim of the project is to ensure that the gains made in COMPAD I are sustained, and to ensure operationalisation of the Competition Policy. The duration of the implementation of the project is eight months.

Investment Incentives in Zambia

CUTS Lusaka, Zambia is currently working on a project with the Zambia Accountability Programme (ZAP). This project entails calculating and evaluating the drivers of the Marginal Effective Tax rates in the key economic sectors in Zambia, which are manufacturing, mining, agriculture and financial sectors. The main objective of this project is to conduct an assessment of the sector level marginal effective tax rates and evaluate investment drivers, given the predominance of tax incentives in investment promotion in Zambia.

Food Reserve Agency Reform Project

CUTS Lusaka is undertaking a project with Food Trade in providing checks and balances on the reformation of the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) in Zambia. The main objective of this project is to conduct a research and compare the current FRA Act to the FRA Bill that is before the parliament. Subsequently, provide commentary on the findings and support the reform process for the FRA.

ONGOING PROJECTS

Energy Sector Public Budget-Expenditure Tracking

CUTS Accra with funding support from Netherland Development Organisation (SNV) Ghana is undertaking a project entitled 'Energy Sector Public Budget-Expenditure Tracking'. The overarching goal of the project is to help improve electricity access among the rural communities in Ghana. The key objectives of this project are to track how the energy sector budgets are utilised at the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assembly(MMDA) level; help identify and address problems and weaknesses in the energy sector public expenditure, transfer and service delivery; etc. The project is being implemented for three months.

Promoting Sustainable Food Consumption in Zambia

CUTS Lusaka undertook a project in conjunction with World Food Programme (WFP), which is to be done in the form of a survey. It is part of a bigger initiative on awareness-raising and sensitisation of the general public on sustainable diets in Zambia. The objective of this study is to provide insights on food consumption in urban areas, such as Lusaka. This information is critical for influencing households to change food consumption pattern, especially encouraging a shift from mono-diets towards diversification.

Accra-Oxfam Project

CUTS Accra with funding support from OXFAM Ghana is implementing a project dubbed 'Reducing the Poor over Exposure to Indirect Taxes, Expanding the Tax Bracket through Real Estate Taxes, Increase Spending in the Healthcare Sector, Increase Spending in the Education Sector'. The overall objective of the assignment is to present to policymakers the gains that could be achieved through progressive pro-poor public spending and motivate them to bring in adequate fiscal reforms.

NEW INITIATIVES

Understanding Low Intra-regional Trade in Food Products in Select ECOWAS Countries

CUTS Accra, Ghana is seeking for funding support from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and ENDA-CACID to implement a project entitled 'Understanding Low Intra-regional Trade in Food Products in Select ECOWAS Countries'. The goal of the project is to enhance food security in select West African countries through increased intra-regional trade of food products in a sustainable manner. The project is expected to be implemented for a year.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Meeting with USAID

CUTS Accra, Ghana has a meeting with independent agency United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to follow up on the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) study proposal shared with them and other possible project topics.

National Multi-Stakeholder Forum

CUTS Nairobi, Kenya intends to organise a national multi-stakeholder forum aimed at bridging the gap on livestock feed safety and milk safety regulation. The forum will assist in defining the role of stakeholders and foster increased collaboration and coordination among them. Anticipated participants include government representatives from the Ministries of Trade, Health and Agriculture, Sector Regulators and the Private Sector.

Meeting with West Africa Trade Hub

CUTS Accra, Ghana is going to have a meeting with the West Africa Trade Hub to further discuss possible collaborations in the region on trade related issues.

Meeting with Laikipia Technical Committee on Food Safety

CUTS Nairobi, Kenya and Society of Crop Agribusiness Advisors (SOCAA) will organise a meeting with the Laikipia Technical Committee to advocate for the incorporation of food safety aspects into the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP). The meeting will be held in Laikipia County and will comprise participants from Agriculture, Livestock and Trade county government departments.

Policy Roundtable Meetings

Policy Roundtable Meetings in Bomet and Homa Bay Counties meetings will be held to help in lobbying the government to adopt pro-renewable energy policies that will steer the country into large scale RE investments for grid and off grid use. Besides, it provides an opportunity for CUTS Nairobi, Kenya to contribute inputs towards the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP).

COMPAD II: Competition Law Drafting

CUTS Accra, Ghana is soliciting for funding support from the Business Sector Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC) Fund to implement a project 'COMPAD II: Competition Law Drafting'. The aim of the project is to draft the National Competition Law for the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI).

NEW INITIATIVES

Aggregating Smallholder Farmers into Value Chains in Ghana to Enhance Food Security

CUTS Accra, Ghana is soliciting support from OSIWA to implement a project dubbed ‘Aggregating Smallholder Farmers into Value Chains in Ghana to Enhance Food Security’. The aim of the project is to enhance smallholder farmers’ welfare by addressing barriers to inclusive market access and participation in the value chain in two states of Ghana.

Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Public Procurement through Consumer Involvement

CUTS Accra, Ghana is seeking support from National Endowment for Democracy to undertake a project dubbed ‘Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Public Procurement through Consumer Involvement’. The Purpose of the project is to bring public procurement process related information to public domain and make it more accessible. The project is expected to be implemented over a year’s period.

Exploring Challenges Surrounding PPPs

CUTS Accra, Ghana is soliciting for funding support from Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung (FES) to implement a project dubbed ‘Exploring the Challenges Surrounding Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) in the Country’. The goal of the project is to study and analyse key PPP projects in the country to understand such partnerships.

PUBLICATIONS

ReguLetter

The October-December 2017 issue of ReguLetter carries cover story entitled, ‘Nigeria is Finally Adopting Competition Law. Is Ghana Next? It states that Nigeria has recently passed the harmonised version of the Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Bill now being slated for the President’s assent, when it will become a law. However, on the other hand, Ghana is in a long drawn process of having a functional competition policy and law. While the prospect of Ghanaian businesses operating under a competition law and policy from 2018 is encouraging, there is a need to ensure that bills in both Nigeria and Ghana does not get entangled into bureaucratic wrangles and vested interests lobbying.

A special feature by Nisha Kaur Oberoi opines that the year 2017 has been a year of significant changes for India’s competition law regime, with several positive changes made both by the Competition Commission of India and the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Another article by Leonid Bershidsky states that the EU’s tax cases against Amazon, Apple and Google rest on a teetering foundation.

This newsletter can be accessed at: www.cuts-ccier.org/reguletter.htm



Economiquity

The October-December 2017 issue of Economiquity carries an article entitled, ‘Failure of Latest WTO Summit reveals an Alarming Global Indifference to Multilateralism’ stating that recently concluded Ministerial Conference at Buenos Aires, Argentina is yet another example of unsuccessful WTO Ministerial. The question is how to get trade multilateralism out of its crisis, so that there is a greater political push for globalisation with equity. A special article by Martin Wolf states that International Monetary Fund (IMF) data show low income nations suffer from events for which they bear no blame. Another special article by Barry Ritholtz opines that do not blame liberals and regulations; blame capitalism and technology.

This newsletter can be accessed at: www.economiquity.org

REPRESENTATIONS

Appiah Kusi Adomako, Centre Coordinator and **Isaac Yaw Obeng** of CUTS Accra had a meeting with Ghana Institute of Freight Forwarders (GIFF), on December 18, 2017 in Accra to meet the President of Ghana GIFF to discuss anti-competitive practices in the freight business in Ghana.

Daniel Asher, Boniface Otieno Owin, Kebenei Chepkoech Joan, Beryl Onjala and **Martin Mulwa** of CUTS Nairobi, Kenya attended a Public Forum on Milk Safety and Loss Reduction on October 12, 2017. The objective of the Forum was to gather public opinion on milk safety in the country and create awareness on possible feasible policy solutions.

Chenai Mukumba, Centre Coordinator represented CUTS Lusaka during signing of MoU between COMESA to create working relationship between the two organisations. CUTS Lusaka and COMESA alliance took place on October 04, 2017 at the COMESA Secretariat office.

Clement Onyango, Director (CUTS Nairobi), along with **Daniel Asher, Beryl Onjala, Martin Mulwa** and **Collins Owegi** of Nairobi Centre attended a Systemic Team Coaching Workshop organised by SNV on November 16, 2017. The objective of the workshop was to understand systemic team coaching for organisational development.

Clement Onyango, Appiah Kusi Adomako and Chenai Mukumba attended the CUTS Biennial Conference held at Jaipur, India on November 09-13, 2017.

Muntanga Musiwa of CUTS Lusaka participated in International Tax Justice Academy aiming to foster and build greater capacity for participants to engage with various tax experts to discuss content matter, aimed at building a knowledge – driven pool of African tax justice activists. The event was held from November 05-10, 2017.

Clement Onyango, Daniel Asher, Beryl Onjala, Martin Mulwa and **Collins Owegi** attended a Systemic Team Coaching Workshop organised by SNV on November 16, 2017. To objective of the workshop was to understand systemic team coaching for organisational development.

Ishmael Zulu of CUTS Lusaka represented CUTS Lusaka, Zambia at the Fifth Pan Africa Conference on Illicit Financial Flows held on October 11-13, 2017 in Nairobi Kenya. The objective was to equip participants with crucial knowledge needed to effectively engage, influence policy change and contribute to the effective mobilisation and use of domestic resources within their geo-political boundaries.

Daniel Asher, Boniface Otieno Owin, and Martin Mulwa of CUTS Nairobi, Kenya attended a meeting with Bomet Non-government Organisation (NGO) Consortium on October 05, 2017 to strengthen links with other NGOs working in Bomet County.

Chenai Mukumba attended World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Annual Meetings organised at Washington, USA from October 09-15, 2017.

Daniel Asher, Boniface Otieno Owin and Martin Mulwa of CUTS Nairobi, Kenya attended the SP-E National Planning meeting on October 09, 2017 to discuss 2018 activity plan under the project.

Ishmael Zulu of CUTS Lusaka participated in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Meeting organised by the Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry held on December 05, 2017. The main objective of the meeting was to prepare for the 11th Ministerial Conference.

Daniel Asher, Martin Mulwa and Collins Owegi attended a meeting with County Government of Bomet officials on November 23, 2017. The objective of the meeting was to review the draft Green Energy Policy for Bomet.



Mergers and Acquisitions in the Absence of Antitrust Law

*Appiah Kusi Adomako
Graphic Online, November 28, 2017*

Mergers and acquisitions (M&A) are defined as the consolidation of companies. Differentiating the two terms, mergers is the combination of two companies to form one, while acquisitions is one company taken over by the other. The reasoning behind M&A generally given is that two separate companies together create more value compared to one standing alone. M&A allows for financial synergy through the lower cost of capital, improving company's performance and accelerating growth, economies of scale, diversification for higher growth products or markets, as well as increasing market share and positioning giving broader market access. It allows for strategic realignment and technological change, tax considerations and diversification of risk.

<https://www.graphic.com.gh/features/opinion/mergers-and-acquisitions-in-the-absence-of-antitrust-law.html>

CUTS Asks ERB to Announce New Fuel Prices as per 60-day Promise

News Diggers, December 21, 2017

Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS International, Lusaka) Centre Coordinator Chenai Mukumba has challenged the Energy Regulation Board (ERB) to stick to its commitment of announcing fuel price adjustments. Mukumba said ERB should be consistent with its policy pronouncements because nobody asked the Board to make the promise. "I think we have mentioned it before that there is a lot of inconsistency in terms of how often ERB is announcing adjustments in prices. It cannot restrict itself in announcing only hikes in reductions. For example, right now they are not announcing because there has been no change but it is important that they communicate what is happening to stakeholders, so that they know what's happening in the market", Mukumba added.

<https://diggers.news/local/2017/12/21/cuts-asks-erb-to-announce-new-fuel-prices-as-per-60-day-promise/>

Yofi Grant Backs Call for Competition Law

B&FT, December 08, 2017

Yofi Grant, Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) has backed the call for enactment of a National Competition Law to regulate the market's conduct as way of creating a level playing field that accrues to the benefit of both producers and consumers. The Minister for Trade and Industry (MoTI), Allan Kyeremanten indicated that the Ministry has been able to put together the draft framework for a National Competition Law and National Competition Policy. Kyeremanten said that the Ministry is pleased to have CUTS Ghana as knowledge-partner on the issues of Competition, and on Consumer Protection, trade facilitation and trade negotiation.

<https://thebftonline.com/top-headlines/yofi-grant-backs-call-for-competition-law/>

Kwacha Depreciation will Strain 2018 Budget: CUTS

News Diggers, October 10, 2017

CUTS Lusaka said that the depreciation of Zambia's currency to K10 against the major convertible currency will make it more expensive for the country to service debts accumulated in dollars. Chenai Mukumba of CUTS Lusaka said that the devaluation in the local currency was likely to put a burden on the 2018 national budget because the country would be financing more than it borrowed. The depreciation of our currency in the last couple of weeks by over K10 against the US\$ is very unfortunate, and it is now more expensive for us to purchase goods from outside the country than before", opined Mukumba.

<https://diggers.news/business/2017/10/31/kwacha-depreciation-will-strain-2018-budget-cuts-2/>