



## EVENTS

### **CREW Project NRG II Meeting**

CUTS Lusaka held the Second National Reference Group Meeting (NRG II) on June 27, 2014. Having undertaken both primary and secondary data collection for the CREW Project (Competition Reforms in Key Markets for Enhancing Social and Economic Welfare in Developing Countries) The Second NRG meeting was held for purposes of sharing the preliminary findings and issues related to the state of Competition Reforms in both sectors with the NRG members in order to obtain input, guidance and support to the process of implementing the project.

### **Policy Roundtable Discussion on “EPA What Should Ghana’s Response be”?**

CUTS Accra organised its third Policy Roundtable discussion on June 17, 2014, to discuss the ongoing debate on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs) between the ECOWAS countries and the European Union (EU). The Roundtable Discussion explored innovative ways as to how Ghana could gain immensely from the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) and should Regional Pact be signed on the same.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### **CREW NRG-II Meeting**

CUTS Accra will hold the CREW NRG-II meeting on July 25, 2014 at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER) in Accra, Ghana. The event will be jointly organised by CUTS Accra and Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER). The aim of the meeting is to offer a platform for the sector experts who participated in the CREW research to share the findings from their work to the NRG for feed-back before the final research report is submitted.

### **CUTS Accra Quarterly Roundtable Discussion**

CUTS Accra on July 17, 2014 will hold its quarterly Roundtable discussion on the theme “How Can Ghana Get the Best out of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)”?. Justice Samuel Date-Bah will chair the roundtable. CUTS Accra Board members, the media, and CSOs would be a part of the event.

### **BUSAC Advocacy Training on Practice of Effective Advocacy**

CUTS Accra won a grant from the Business Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC) Fund Phase II to implement an advocacy project titled “Advocating for a Functional Competition Regime in Ghana.” As part of the grant requirements, CUTS Accra will participate in a four-day residential training organised by the BUSAC Fund from July 7-11, 2014. The training aims to build the capacity and sharpen the advocacy skills of all BUSAC grantees

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Forthcoming Events ..</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>Representations.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>New Projects .....</b>	<b>2-3</b>
<b>Publications .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Reflections From Media .....</b>	<b>4</b>

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

### **Launch of the Impact Assessment of the Business Licensing Reform**

CUTS Lusaka will be launching a project entitled “Impact Assessment of the Business Licensing Reform” in Zambia in July, 2014. The objective of the launch is to give a brief background of the project and present the research methodology. The project web page will also be launched at the event.

### **Media Meeting and Sharing of Scoping Study on Sugar**

CUTS Lusaka will be holding a media breakfast meeting on June 30, 2014. The purpose of this meeting will be to share the findings of the scoping study on the dynamics of the sugar industry in Zambia. Considering the role of the media in information dissemination and the awareness raising agenda, CUTS will share the findings of the study with the media in order to initiate economic debate.

### **Public Discussion Forum**

CUTS International Lusaka will be holding a public discussion forum on June 30, 2014. The topic for the public discussion was “Assessment of the Structural and Political Economy Issues in the Zambia Sugar Industry”. The purpose of the public discussion is therefore to share the findings of the scoping study and generate people’s views and opinions on the key findings of the study.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

**Rijit Sengupta**, Regional Director, Africa and **Appiah Adomako**, Centre Coordinator, CUTS Accra attended the plenary session of the 2014 Global Development Conference (GDN) at the Accra International Conference on June 19, 2014. The session saw presentations on various topics from what Economic Model Suits Africa to EU Restriction on fruit exports from Accra due to phyto-sanitary issues.

**Martha Getachew** from CUTS Nairobi attended an East African Community (EAC) Trade Experts Roundtable on June 19, 2014 organised by SEATINI.

**Martha Getachew** attended a study launch and Roundtable on ‘Towards a Coherent and Cost Effective Policy Response to Climate Change’ on June 17, 2014.

**Appiah Adomako** and **Edayatu Lamptey** from CUTS Accra attended the ‘Stakeholder Sensitisation Dialogue Forum’ organised by the Borderless Alliance on the subject “Axel-load Stakeholders Dialogue” on May 20, 2014 at the Coconut Grove Hotel, Accra.

CUTS Lusaka participated in the Stakeholders’ Workshop on April 9, 2014 on the Roles of Zambia Bureau of standards (ZABS) as a National standards Body organised by the ZABS and facilitated by the International Standards Organisation (ISO).

**Appiah Adomako**, **Kshitiz Sharma** Assistant Director, CUTS and **Edayatu Lamptey** of CUTS Accra attended the Stakeholder Sensitisation Dialogue organised by the Borderless Alliance on the subject, “Cross-border Trade Flows of Agricultural Products and Road Harassment on Trade Corridors” on April 03, 2014 at the Coconut Grove Hotel, Accra.

CUTS Lusaka participated at the Sector Advisory Group meeting on Trade at the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry (MCTI). CUTS Lusaka was invited to participate and provide inputs into the process of reviewing the trade policy for Zambia, an initiative embarked on by the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry.

**Susanne Rabisch** and **Munu Martiin** from CUTS Nairobi attended Energy Regulatory Commission Stakeholder Workshop on regulatory reforms on May 10.

## **NEW PROJECTS**

### **CREW Project: Reviewing Competition Reforms**

CUTS Accra with funding support from the Department for International Development (DFID), UK and BMZ, Germany through GIZ, Germany, is implementing a project in Ghana called, “Competition Reforms in Key Markets for Enhancing Social and Economic Welfare in Developing Countries (CREW project): Staple Food and Passenger Transport”. The aim of the project is to identify and review all competition reforms passed during the period of the Forth Republic relevant to the staple food sector (maize) and in passenger transport and will be implemented over a period of 3 years.

### **Impact of Excessive Sugar Pricing on the Downstream Market Players**

CUTS Lusaka is implementing a project on ‘Understanding the Impact of Excessive Sugar Pricing on the Downstream Market Players and Household consumers’. The objective of the project is to bring out better clarity on where prices inflation of sugar occurs and the actual impact on household in terms of the monthly expenditure.

## NEW PROJECTS

### Advocating for a Functional Competition Regime/Framework

CUTS Accra with funding support from the Business Advocacy Challenge (BUSAC) Fund is implementing a project entitled “Advocating for a Functional Competition Regime/ Framework”, referred to as the (COMPAD). The main objective of the project is to advocate for a well-enforced Competition Regime in Ghana. CUTS Accra is certain that a National Competition Regime in the country will reduce uncertainty for businesses, as well as, serve as an important element of a regulatory package for private sector development. The project will be implemented over a 15 month period.

### Impact Assessment of the Business Licensing Reforms

Impact Assessment of the Business Licensing Reforms on the Public Transport Sector is a 6 months project being undertaken by CUTS Lusaka. The overall objective of this research awareness generation project will be to assess the impact of the business licensing reforms (BLRP) on the public (passenger) transport sector from the point of view of welfare gains or losses to service providers and consumers/commuters. Zambia’s business licensing reform under the Private Sector Development Programme (PSDRP) has sought to reduce the number of unnecessary licensing requirements, and to make the licensing regime simpler and easy to comply with, especially for Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises (MSMEs).

### Awareness Generation on Healthcare Issues in Zambia

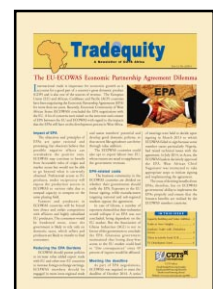
The overall objective of ‘Awareness Generation on Healthcare Issues in Zambia’ is to understand the healthcare issues and the regulatory effectiveness of the healthcare system in Zambia. The project will seek to understand the pricing structures of medicines and basic health services in Zambia, the vertical and horizontal agreements that exists between health professionals, exploitative conducts, quality of prescriptions *vis-a-vis* diagnosis and uniformity of charges.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Tradequity

Tradequity is a newsletter that carries stories focusing on consumer protection issues and the measures to strengthen the consumer movement for mobilising citizen action and solidarity. The April-June issue carries a cover story entitled “The EU-ECOWAS Economic Partnership Agreement Dilemma” It covers news on Economics and Development, Consumer Protection, Regional Integration and Trade Policies and Environment Issues.

[http://www.cuts-international.org/arc/pdf/Tradequity14-The\\_EU-ECOWAS\\_Economic\\_Partnership\\_Agreement\\_Dilemma.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/arc/pdf/Tradequity14-The_EU-ECOWAS_Economic_Partnership_Agreement_Dilemma.pdf)



### BRICS-TERN Newsletter

BRICS Trade & Economics Research Network (BRICS-TERN) was established as a platform for non-governmental organisations from Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa to assist in furthering South-South cooperation through network-based policy research and advocacy on contemporary and developmental issues. In line with networks’ agenda, every quarter BRICS-TERN publishes a four page newsletter that provides an overview of the most recent BRICS trade and investment-related activities and provides information on the research and networking activities that are being undertaken by BRICS-TERN partners.

This newsletter can be accessed at: <http://cuts-international.org/BRICS-TERN/publications.htm>

**CUTS Complains to Zamtel over Poor Internet Services**

*The Post Zambia, April 09, 2014*

Consumer Rights Body, CUTS International, Lusaka has written Zamtel to complain about what it calls deteriorating Internet service. This is barely a year after the Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA) commenced criminal proceedings against Zamtel and two other mobile phone operators in the country for failing to meet minimum quality standards. “

We would like to bring to your attention the continued injustice your company has been subjecting us to. We are holders of an Internet account with Zamtel (5389729)”, partly read a letter dated March 28 signed by CUTS International, Lusaka National Coordinator, Simon Ng’ona.

“For the past few months, we have been having outages in supply of Internet services despite payments being made. In most days, we have gone without Internet. We believe that this was not only happening with CUTS, but equally other individual consumers who have no means to voice out”. Zamtel initially said it was upgrading its system into the optic fibre network, hence the supply interruption, Ng’ona added. “The deadline to this process was given and this has since elapsed. Not to take away challenges which could have been associated with the upgrading process, it is our view, based on experience, that no improvement has been recorded,” he argued.

<http://www.postzambia.com/09.04.14>

**Rising Cost of Living Worries CUTS Lusaka,**

*The Post Zambia, June 10, 2014*

Efforts to tackle the rising cost of living should be a government priority at the moment, according to CUTS International Zambia. The consumer watchdog said it is concerned that the cost of living in Zambia, which has been on the rise the past months, would continue especially with the latest hike in electricity tariffs.

“In as much as there is need for cost reflective tariffs, consumers will be negatively impacted by the upward adjustment and measures to cushion them should be taken because in the last seven months, we can safely say living costs have almost doubled”, Consumer Unit and Trust Society (CUTS)-International Zambia National Coordinator Simon Ng’ona said in an interview yesterday.

We had the fuel subsidy that was scrapped leading to pump prices increase, then mealie-meal prices went up after a subsidy to millers was removed and in the 2014 national budget, we had several tax hikes, for instance, on airtime, money transfers. Water tariffs were also increased in Lusaka. All these negatively impacted on the consumers. But now we have this electricity tariff increment. We feel the government really needs to act to make Zambia an affordable place to live in”. The increment would also see tariffs for commercial consumers increase by 15.38 percent, 19.49 percent for small power and 5.11 percent for large power while social services would pay 15.38 percent.

[http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Rising\\_cost\\_of\\_living\\_worries\\_CUTS-Zambia.html](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Rising_cost_of_living_worries_CUTS-Zambia.html)

**Produce Road Map to Implement NEF Outcome - AGI**

*Daily Graphic, May 31, 2014*

The Association of Ghana Industries (AGI) has called on the government to draw a road map with timelines for the implementation of the resolutions of the National Economic Forum (NEF).

It said the timely implementation of the resolutions is most crucial, since any delay in its implementation would dash all hopes and prospects of getting the economy back on a sound trajectory. In a statement issued in Accra, the AGI said it was hopeful that the outcome of the NEF would mitigate the present economic hardships and the rising cost of doing business in the country.

<http://graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/24048-produce-road-map-to-implement-nef-outcome-agi.html>

**CUTS Warns Women over Counterfeit Beauty Products**

*The Post, 21.09.14*

Rising desire by most Zambian women to enhance their beauty is increasingly making them vulnerable targets for counterfeit products, a consumer watchdog said. In an interview, the CUTS International Zambia advised that it was important that women become cautious of the products they consume. “Women ought to be careful; there are a number of fake female dominated or consumed products on the market produced by those with ill-intentions”, CUTS, Lusaka Co-ordinator Simon Ng’ona said.

“Don’t be unfortunate like a woman I am feeling for who bought fake sanitary pads, only to lose her womb after consuming the same”. He said the in-born desire by women to look beautiful should be complimented with a culture of caution when purchasing products. “The private sector is targeting women as a lucrative market hence the need to be alert,” he said. Ng’ona cited beauty enhancing products, such as skin bleaching creams as some of the products women need to be careful with.

<http://postzambia.com/21.09.14>