



## EVENTS

### Promoting Agriculture-Climate-Trade Linkages in the EAC

CUTS with support from the Swedish International Development Agency launched the project entitled, 'Promoting Agriculture-Climate-Trade Linkages in the EAC' (PACT EAC) through a meeting in Arusha, Tanzania on February 23-24, 2012.

Richard Sezibera, EAC Secretary General, said that the commodity price volatility has further impacted on small-scale farmers, consumers, and investors, leaving them with no immediate solutions. He stated that the EAC is going out of its way through multi-sectoral approaches to increase knowledge and devise holistic policies on climate change, food security and trade



linkages to enhance capacity.

Jean Claude Nsengiyumva, EAC Deputy Secretary General gave an account of the impressive institutional development of EAC and emphasised on the need for regular interaction among stakeholders for the preparation

and implementation of holistic policies related to trade, climate change and food security.

Ramamurti Badrinath, Director CUTS International Geneva, welcomed the participants and outlined the importance of agriculture which provides livelihoods to 80 percent of the EAC population. Yet, about 40 percent of East African are malnourished, a situation that can get worse due to climate change. According to him, PACT EAC project strives to meet this challenge through awareness-raising, inclusive research and training, and multi-stakeholder capacity building.

Musa Sirma, Kenyan Minister for the EAC, urged the PACT EAC project to generate recommendations for realistic and effective policies as well as build the capacity of stakeholders to implement the policies.

The meeting was attended by more than 50 representatives of international and regional organisations such as FAO and the EAC as well as of governments, CSOs, private sector, think tanks and media from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and other countries.

### Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Competition in Zambia

CUTS International Lusaka in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Zambia) conducted a workshop on 'Role of Trade Unions in Promoting Competition in Zambia' at Kitwe on February 13, 2012.

The objective of the event was to sensitise trade unions about competition policy and law as well as its enforcement modalities, as a way of building their capacity to levels that would enable them to meaningfully participate in competition enforcement in the country.

The meeting was thus expected to outline the various means through which trade unions can participate in the process of competition enforcement in Zambia.

Participants were also taken through examples to demonstrate how curbing anticompetitive practices would enhance workers' welfare in the country. The programme drew participation from the major trade unions in the province such as the Zambia Union of Industrial and Allied Workers.

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### National Reference Group Meeting

CUTS is organising National Reference Group Meetings to introduce the PACT-EAC Project and seek inputs to draft research papers on trade-climate change and food security linkages in all five EAC member countries. The NRG meeting will be held on in Nairobi, Kenya on May 22, 2012; in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on May 23, 2012; in Kampala, Uganda on May 25, 2012; in Bujumbura, Burundi on May 28, 2012; and in Kigali, Rwanda on May 30, 2012 respectively.

### Fostering Equitable Agricultural Development

CUTS is organising a final dissemination workshop on Fostering Equitable Agricultural Development (FEAD). The workshop will take place in Nairobi Kenya on May 22, 2012; in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on May 23, 2012; and in Kampala, Uganda on May 25, 2012 respectively.

[www.cuts-grc.org/FEAD-Project.htm](http://www.cuts-grc.org/FEAD-Project.htm)

### World Consumer Rights Day

The World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on 15<sup>th</sup> March each year across the globe to bring together consumers organisations, government agencies and private sector in highlighting rights and responsibilities of consumers.

CUTS participated in this year's World Consumer Rights Day with the theme 'Our Money, Our Rights: Campaigning for real Choice in financial Services' in Zambia. March past was officiated by the Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry. CUTS was also one of the organisers for this meeting and participated in radio and TV programmes on the same topic.

## NEW PROJECTS

### Hands off the Land

CUTS is implementing a research based project entitled 'Hands off the Land' funded by the European Commission (EC). The project aims at raising public awareness especially in four countries – Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Poland and the target groups are general public, journalists, social justice activists.

The overall objective of the project is to contribute to a better compliance by European and home states regarding the promotion and protection of the Human Rights to Adequate Food and Water as defined in the General Comment No. 12 and 15 in the UN-International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in Mali, Mozambique, Zambia, Cambodia and Colombia, especially in relation to large-scale investment in land and agricultural policies. The duration of the project is of three years.

### Consumer Rights Empowerment for Socio-Economic Justice and Good Governance

CUTS is implementing a project entitled 'Consumer Rights Empowerment for Socio-Economic Justice and Good Governance' (CONSREG) in Kenya. The project is funded by Akiba Uhaki Foundation and it seeks to empower marginalised consumers to demand their rights and actively participate in ensuring good governance for better service delivery in five sectors (Healthcare, Transportation, Electricity, Telecom and Water). A 'State of Kenya Consumer Report' would also be prepared (based on their experience and expectations) in these sectors.

[www.consumerforum.co.ke/](http://www.consumerforum.co.ke/)

### SMEs Performance and Devolved Government System

CUTS is implementing a project entitled 'SMEs Performance and Devolved Government System: A Regulatory and Institutional Assessment in Kenya' (RICS). The project is funded by ICBE-Trust Africa and it seeks to analyse the institutional and regulatory challenges facing the SMEs in four different provinces in Kenya. Specific SMEs clusters are being looked at, to generate debate on the need for promoting SMEs sector in the country.

### Assignment for the Rwandan Ministry of Trade and Industry

CUTS is currently providing services to the Rwandan Ministry of Trade and Industry on a project to study anticompetitive practices in three industries (Bank, Breweries and Insurance) in Rwanda. The assignment seeks to conduct investigations on anticompetitive practices in these markets and to build capacity within the Competition and Consumer Protection Unit in the Ministry.

## REPRESENTATIONS

**Daniel Asher** and **Trevor Analo** made representation at the KEWASNET study circle session organised with the support of Simavi and ICCO of Dutch WASH in Nairobi, Kenya on February 16, 2012.

**Daniel Asher** attended a meeting by the Government of Kenya Ministry of Energy under its study on options for the development of the power market in Kenya in Nairobi on April 18, 2012.

**Daniel Asher** and **Trevor Analo** in partnership with the University of California, Barkley conducted a financial literacy training programme in Kibera – the biggest informal settlement in Kenya, under the project entitled 'Expanding the Realm of Consumer Protection through Education: the case of Kenya' in Nairobi, Kenya, on April 23-25, 2012.

**Clement Onyango** and **Fredrick Njehu** attended the National Stakeholders Planning EAC Non State Actors Forum organised by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Nairobi, Kenya on April 18, 2012. CUTS presented proposed work on Common Market Protocol and EAC Monetary Union.

### **Rein in Greedy Fuel Marketers Now**

*Business Daily Africa, January 18, 2012*

**Daniel Asher**

Kenyan consumers have for a long time been victims of exploitative practices by fuel marketers. We demand an amicable resolution to the current impasse on fuel price inflation and supply shortage. There is every indication that major players in the local oil industry fuel sector tend to influence retail prices even if it means creating shortages at the expense of consumers. The oil marketers are always eager to act swiftly when the regulator revises fuel prices upward with the effects of such changes being felt instantly at the pumps across the country with uninterrupted supply.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Nairobi/article-Rein\\_in\\_greedy\\_fuel\\_marketers\\_now.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Nairobi/article-Rein_in_greedy_fuel_marketers_now.htm)

### **It's time for Government to Seize Control of Oil Industry from Cartels**

*People.co.ke, January 19, 2012*

**Daniel Asher**

Consumers have for a longtime been victims of exploitative practices by oil marketers in Kenya and now it is time we say no. It is time to demand for amicable resolution to the current impasse on fuel price inflation and supply short-age. There is every indication that major players in the oil industry have a tendency to influence retail prices by all means, even creating artificial shortages.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Nairobi/article-Its\\_time\\_for\\_Government\\_to\\_seize\\_control\\_of\\_oil\\_industry\\_from\\_cartels.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Nairobi/article-Its_time_for_Government_to_seize_control_of_oil_industry_from_cartels.htm)

### **Media Challenged**

*ZNBC, Zambia, March 29, 2012*

The media has been challenged to take interest in reporting on trade and budget issues to stimulate public participation in economic affairs. Simon Ng'ona of CUTS said the media has a role to play in advocating for policy changes that favours investment and create more jobs. And government says women in media should ensure they comply to media ethical code of conduct which has been a source of concern in the past.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Media\\_challenged.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Media_challenged.htm)

### **CCPC Calls for Consumer Responsiveness**

*Daily Mail, Zambia, March 15, 2012*

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has urged traders and service providers to be responsive to consumers' concerns by providing products and services that will guarantee satisfaction. And CCPC Director of Consumer and Public Relations Brian Lingela says consumers should report matters that violate their rights of choice through the consumer redress mechanism established in most institutions.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-CCPC\\_calls\\_for\\_consumer\\_responsiveness.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-CCPC_calls_for_consumer_responsiveness.htm)

### **Kwacha Down-Trend Harms Consumers, Producers**

*Daily Mail, Zambia, March 14, 2012*

CUTS has expressed concern on the continued depreciation of the Kwacha against the major convertible currencies saying it has adverse effect on both the producer and consumer welfare.

The consumer body has called on government to put in place mitigation measures aimed at strengthening the local currency, which has been sliding against major foreign currencies.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Kwacha\\_down-trend\\_harms\\_consumers\\_producers.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Kwacha_down-trend_harms_consumers_producers.htm)

### **Provide Competition, Zamtel told**

*Zambia Daily Mail, January 29, 2012*

CUTS has called on the new Zamtel management to ensure that the company provides formidable competition in the mobile telecommunication market. Applauding government's move to reverse the sale of Zamtel, CUTS International, Lusaka, Chairman Love Mtesa said telecommunications, and mobile in particular, is an important and sensitive sector in the development of any country and cannot be given away from one government to another government as was the case with Zamtel.

[www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Provide\\_competition\\_Zamtel\\_told.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/ARC/Lusaka/media-Provide_competition_Zamtel_told.htm)