

Press Statement

26 February 2020

About us

The Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) International, Lusaka is an NGO that was established in 2000 to function as a center for research, advocacy and networking on issues of trade and development, economic governance and consumer welfare.

The mission of the center is to function as a resource, co-ordination, as well as networking center, to promote South-South cooperation on trade and development by involving state and non-state actors (NSAs).

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THANK YOU!

Contact us



CUTS & Lusaka City Council Launch Lusaka Food Policy Council

Why is this important for you as a consumer?

Consumers have a right to both physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences. Unfortunately, due to complexities within the Lusaka food system this has not yet been fully realized. In establishing a Food Policy Council, CUTS will be working with the Lusaka City Council and other stakeholders to develop a framework to help address some of the issues that prevent consumers from accessing sufficient, safe and nutritious food with a focus on the informal sector.

Statement

On Tuesday, 25 February, the Consumer Unity and Trust Society and the Lusaka City Council with support from Hivos launched the 'Lusaka Food Policy Council' at the Civic Centre. Over the past few months the Consumer Unity and Trust Society (CUTS) and the Lusaka City Council (LCC) have been in discussions about developing a Food Initiative that will provide a set of guidelines governing the food system in Lusaka. The meeting was officiated by the Town Clerk of Lusaka, Mr Alex Mwansa.

To achieve this objective CUTS and the LCC recognised the importance of engaging different stakeholders that participate in the food system. As such, the meeting was attended by different stakeholders from the public and private sector, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and media. These included representatives from the University of Zambia, NRDC, World Food Programme, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Community Development, Care International, Food and Drugs and the Zambia Alliance of Women.

In his remarks Mr Mwansa highlighted that the Lusaka City Council welcomed this initiative and emphasised its importance as such a platform was necessary in order to identify solutions to address the complex issues facing Lusaka's food system. He noted that some of the issues facing Lusaka required addressing the problems in the informal markets as they play a significant role in the distribution of food in Lusaka. As such, he highlighted that a framework governing the Lusaka food system was therefore very welcome.

Ms Mukumba, the CUTS Centre Coordinator, noted that this work fell in line with CUTS' primary mandate of promoting the welfare of consumers. She noted that the food system in the city of Lusaka is complex and is being impacted by both rapid urbanisation pressures and globalising food systems. She highlighted that many households in the city are low income and are found in informal settlements therefore the governance of food systems, including coordination and management of open air residential and wholesale markets would have a significant impact on households.

Hivos Southern Africa Regional Advocacy Manager, Mr William Chilufya, shared that the establishment of the Food Policy Council was supported under their Sustainable Diets for All Programme. He noted that Zambia has one of the most malnourished populations in the world and it was against this background that they were in support of an initiative that sought to promote increased access of safe, affordable diverse foods.

Participants noted the need to focus on informal markets pointing out that the majority of consumers across high, middle- and low-income households in Lusaka purchase their foods from informal markets as they provide easy access to affordable food. They welcomed the initiative saying it was in fact necessary fifty years ago. The Food Policy Council will be meeting every month to undertake a policy review, develop an operational plan and food initiative for Lusaka. Anyone wishing to join the council is welcome & can contact Ms Jane Zulu on +260977-122-477.

By Ms. Jane Zulu, Assistant Programmes Officer