

Outline of the ‘Advocacy Roadmap for Competition Reforms in The Gambia’
7Up4 Project NRG Members, The Gambia

On 08 April, 2010, as a part of the advocacy activities under the 7Up4 project, members of the National Reference Group (NRG), a group of key national stakeholders from the country drawn from government, business, civil society and media formed under the 7up4 project, met at Kairaba Beach Hotel, Banjul to develop an outline of an ‘advocacy strategy roadmap’ for competition reforms in The Gambia.

CUTS’s institutional partner for the 7up4 in Gambia, Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (Pro-PAG) was instrumental in organising and collating views for the outline, in collaboration with other stakeholders from institutions such as the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) and the Gambia Competition Commission (GCC) among others.

CUTS firmly believes that the operationalisation of this advocacy roadmap with the involvement of Pro-PAG, GCC, PURA and other key national stakeholders, would result in creation of enabling environment for the effective enforcement of the competition regime in the country. The Table below summarises the advocacy roadmap.

S.N	Specific action point	Required Inputs	Likely Impact/Outcome
1.	Enhance the understanding of National Assembly members and CSOs	Consumer Advocacy Groups such as CCOSPAG, CPAG, FGI etc to identify influential members of National Assembly (NA); Organise interactive session with them; Encourage and provide resource materials (publications) to enable them to reach out to entire NA Gambia Competition Commission (GCC) and Pro-PAG to hold focus group discussions with key CSO leaders; Empower them with resource materials to reach out their members	More informed policy discourse on competition issues More effective advocacy for policy change Effective oversight over activities of competition commission
2.	Engage proactively with the business sector	Pro-PAG to meet bi-annually with the Gambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry to disseminate ideas on competition GCC and Pro-PAG to prepare a leaflet on Competition issues to be disseminated to business through Gambia Revenue Authority channels.	Enhanced competition culture among business operators Better cooperation between competition commission and business sector achieved
3.	Enhance consumer awareness of competition issues and create a consumer movement	CSOs such as Pro-PAG, CCOSPAG, CPAG, through assistance from GCC on content, to organise radio and TV talk shows in English and local languages, with possible additional funding assistance from PURA GCC to prepare and disseminate competition information materials in English and local languages	Consumers empowered to monitor practices of business operators and to get value for money

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4.	Assist the government to improve capacity for policy formulation	Nominate representatives from the public sector and arrange for targeted capacity-building programmes for staff of these agencies with the support of CUTS	More informed decision making by public sector (competition commission, regulators)
5.	Assist GCC to resolve technical constraints	Pro-PAG, CCOSPAG etc to make available to GCC resource materials from CUTS and other international agencies.	Proactive implementation of provisions of the Act
6.	Advocate for greater funding support for regulatory authorities/agencies	Organise strategic meetings between competition commission, Pro-PAG, Ministry of Finance, and NA to influence allocations to competition authority Pro-PAG and other CSOs to collaborate with commission to develop a strategy for attracting donor funding	Well-resourced and empowered commission that can fulfil its mandate
7.	Facilitate a framework of cooperation between the competition commission and sector regulators	Pro-PAG to facilitate quarterly roundtables between competition authority and sector regulators in which challenges will be discussed and solution proffered, borrowing from experiences of other countries and the expertise of CUTS and other international agencies	MoUs signed and tension arising from issues of concurrent jurisdiction minimised Sector-specific competition rules better implemented by concerned regulators