

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

On 15 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 Rockview Classic Hotel, Abuja to develop an outline of an ‘advocacy strategy roadmap’ for competition reforms in Nigeria.

CUTS’s institutional partner for the 7up4 in Nigeria, Consumer Empowerment Organisation of Nigeria (CEON) was instrumental in organising and collating views for the outline, in collaboration with the Consumer Protection Council of Nigeria (CPC).

CUTS firmly believes that the operationalisation of this advocacy roadmap with the involvement of CEON, CPC and other key national stakeholders, would not only lead to the enactment of a ‘need-based’ competition law in the country – but also the enabling environment for the effective enforcement of the competition regime. The Table below summarises the advocacy roadmap.

S.N	Specific action point	Required Inputs	Likely Impact/Outcome
1	Initiate discussion for establishment of a National Competition at cabinet level.	<p>Dialogue between the Hon. Minister of Commerce & Industry (FMC&I) and NRG members on the need to upgrade the existing policy document into a National Competition Policy</p> <p>A brief write up on the benefits of a National Competition Policy should be prepared (by CUTS, CEON and CPC and the Ministry of Commerce (through Mr Azubuike, an NRG representative of the Ministry)).</p> <p>The write up to be taken to the Hon. Minister of Commerce and Industry to allow him to take the issues for discussion at higher levels (cabinet etc)</p>	<p>A channel enabling NRG members’ discussions and action points on project findings to get to higher level.</p> <p>Discussion of competition issues at high level (cabinet etc) as a result of efforts by NRG members.</p> <p>Initiation of efforts at establishing a national competition policy</p>
2	To stop the proliferation of Draft Competition Bills at the National Assembly, to date, 6 Bills with none passed into law.	<p>Dialogue with National Assembly members to understand why Bills could not be passed.</p> <p>A meeting with the Senate Committee on Commerce by a sub-committee of NRG members (comprising representatives from Ministry of Commerce, CPC, CEON, Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), and ENABLE (a local NGO) for dialogue.</p> <p>Harmonizing the existing Bills into one which can be easily passed, through a Bill mapping exercise, led by ENABLE leading to the tabling of one Bill acceptable to all the parties</p>	<p>Better understanding of National Assembly members’ view on competition issues</p> <p>Sustainable communication network between NRG members and National Assembly members (through the Senate Committee), aimed to ensure smooth passage of future Competition Bills into law.</p> <p>A Competition Bill with a greater probability of being passed into law by the National Assembly.</p>

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3	To increase awareness on the benefits of an effective competition regime amongst politicians and law makers in Nigeria	A capacity building workshop for members of the national Assembly should be conducted. NRG members to involve the Senate Committee on Commerce for a better strategy and logistics for such a workshop	National Assembly members' understanding of competition policy and law issues enhanced, and high chances that future bills would be passed into law given a positive attitude by national Assembly members.
4	Continuing with efforts to boost awareness of competition issues among all key stakeholders (government, sector regulators, business etc)	NRG members to facilitate sensitisation workshops, which are more targeted, representative and biased towards anticompetitive practices existing in Nigeria identified under the project and how the law would help.	Increased demand of a competition law by stakeholders in Nigeria.
5	To end the current 'fight' for hosting the proposed competition authority and achieve consensus between the different government departments about the most ideal 'host' of the competition agency, thereby eliminating one of the current basis for rejecting some bills.	CUTS should prepare a paper on international best practices on situation of competition agencies, with examples from across the world, which NRG members would distribute to various arguing bodies and discuss during sensitization workshops.	Some level of consensus on where the competition agency should be hosted, and incorporation in future bills, thereby reducing chances of opposition.
6	To reduce the impact of vested interests and strong lobbies against a competition law in Nigeria.	NRG Members to ensure that in future gatherings, such potential sources of vested interests, particularly from the business sector, should be part of the participants during the capacity building workshops. MAN to be involved in strategies for conducting capacity building workshops with other NRG representatives.	Reduction in opposition to competition bills on the grounds of vested interest.
7	Increasing frequency of reporting of anti-competitive practices in the media.	A journalist and NRG member, Christopher Adedeji, appointed Media Coordinator on behalf of NRG members, to continue with role of being the bridge for NRG members' activities to get attention of the media. A local NGO headed by a journalist, CAFON, also available for use by NRG members in disseminating their activities. CPC to also accommodate competition issues during its weekly radio and TV	Increased coverage of competition issues in the media

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		programmes to ensure that grassroots stakeholders also get to know about competition issues.	
8	To facilitate easy engagement with, and access of NRG members to, Government departments and key Ministries	Dialogue with Ministries by NRG members to have them appoint a desk officer who would be the person to be approached for future engagement rather than a new person every time.	Continuous engagement and discussions between NRG members and government.
10	To involve other supporting institutions and donors in activities by NRG members.	NRG members to ensure that they provide donors with up to date information and provide them with progress reports on the activities of NRG.	Support from donor agencies and other institutions to sustain activities of NRG members.