

**Strengthening Constituencies for Effective Competition Regimes in Select West  
African countries  
(7Up4 Project)**

**INTERIM REVIEW MEETING, 29-30 July, 2009**  
**Venue: Salon Amina, Senegambia Beach Hotel, The Gambia**

**Introductory Remarks by Pradeep S Mehta**  
**Secretary General, CUTS International**

Hon'ble Abdou Kolley, Minister for Finance & Economic Affairs, The Gambia; Monsieur Frederic Jenny, Judge, French Supreme Court and Chairman of International Advisory Board of CUTS CCIER, John Njie Acting Director of Pro-Poor Advocacy Group, The Gambia, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a real privilege to present my introductory remarks to this august gathering at this **interim review meeting** of the **7Up4 project** in this beautiful shores of The Gambia. I shall provide a brief introduction to our organization CUTS' activities, and then proceed to provide an overview of the 7Up4 project.

***About CUTS***

- An international research, advocacy, networking and capacity building organization. Headquarters in Jaipur, India, with resource centres in India, Kenya, Switzerland, Vietnam, UK and Zambia
- Works on international trade, regulation, consumer protection and sustainable development issues.
- One of the premier international non-government organisations working on competition policy and law, and consumer protection issues in the developing world pursuing the **mission: "Promoting Fair Markets to enhance consumer welfare and economic development"**
- Developed and institutionalised a bottom up methodology for civil society to work together with state and other non-state actors in evolving and implementing competition regimes; referred to as the **7Up Model**.
- The 7Up model has been recognised by the international competition community as an effective approach to work on competition policy and law issues in the developing world (**ref: OECD DAC**)

***The 7Up Model***

- **CUTS realisation:** Acceptance and ownership of a competition law among **key stakeholders** is crucial to ensure its **effectiveness**. And, this can only be possible if the expectations and concerns of these stakeholders are taken into consideration while drafting, revising and implementing the law, simultaneously making them aware of the benefits of a proper market regulatory framework in the country. This is essentially the core of the bottom-up approach of the CUTS's 7Up Model.
- The model involves partnering with local **Civil Society Organisations** (in project countries) and engaging a wide range of local stakeholders including the business, the polity, consumer groups and other NGOs, media, academia, lawyers, etc. for undertaking various research, advocacy and capacity building activities on national competition policy and law issues.
- CUTS started implementing projects on competition policy and law issues, involving the 7Up approach from the year 2000. Till date CUTS has successfully tested the 7Up approach (to competition, regulation and investment reforms) in nearly **30 countries** in various parts of **Asia (South Asia and South East Asia) and Africa (Eastern, Western and Southern Africa)**.

## 7Up1 Project

- The first such project, then called *7Up project* (now 7up1) targeted seven Commonwealth developing countries namely: India, Kenya, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Zambia, supported by DFID, UK (2000-2003).

## 7up2 Project

- Implemented in six South and Southeast Asian Countries, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal and Vietnam and included deeper work in India.
- It was supported by the Swiss Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), the Swiss Competition Authority (COMCO) and the Department for International Development (DFID), UK (2004-2006).

## 7up3 project

- Executed in seven countries of Southern and Eastern Africa region, namely Botswana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Uganda.
- Project supported by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the Department for International Development (DFID), UK. (Jan 2005-Feb 2008)

## 7up4 project

- Project entitled, '**Strengthening Constituencies for Effective Competition Regimes in Select Western African Countries**', and referred to as the **7up4 project** targeted both *Anglophone* and *Francophone* countries in *West Africa* (a challenging job, especially due to the language element).
- Targeted project countries are: *Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo*. The project is being supported by DFID (UK), IDRC (Canada) and Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Sweden).
- Aims to supplement the efforts that are already being undertaken either by the national government or the regional authorities on competition policy and law issues, by building constituencies and garnering wider public support for effective competition regimes to evolve in project countries in particular, and the region in general.
- Project comprises of specific **Research, Advocacy** and **Capacity Building** activities that are undertaken at different stages in the project. However, there are clear linkages between these three salient components of the project. Research on competition issues at the national level, with a focus on agriculture markets, sets the stage for undertaking subsequent advocacy and specific capacity building activities.
- We have assembled here in this beautiful country for these two days to take stock of the findings emerging from the research phase of the project. These findings would act as inputs for constructing specific advocacy agenda in the project countries as far as promoting a healthy competition culture and evolving an effective competition regime are concerned. These findings would also influence how the capacity building activities are rolled out in the project. We are at the half-way mark in this project; and can see that a huge volume of information and knowledge (otherwise absent) on competition issues is being created. Now, the onus is on us, of how we intend to utilise this body of information to promote healthy markets in the project countries and ensure consumer welfare and economic development in the countries and indeed the region as a whole.
- I look forward to an enriching two days of discussions and welcome you all to this conference.

**Thank You**