INTRODUCTION

Overview of Communication Sector

National ICT Policy 2003

Objectives spelt within Tanzania Vision 2025.

- To provide a national framework that will enable ICT to contribute towards achieving national development goals.
- Transform Tanzania into a knowledge based society through ICT application.
- Provide a national framework to accommodate the convergence of information communication and technology;

One Key strategic intervention is:
Creation of awareness among leaders and public on communication issues. Hence, genesis of Consumer Consultative Council.
Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA)

Established by TCRA Act November 2003 after the merger of the Tanzania Broadcasting Commission (TBC) and Tanzania Communication Commission (TCC).

Liberalization of Tele market

End of exclusivity of TTCL February 2005 has witnessed a phenomenal growth in the tele market.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Subscribers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>88,000 fixed line and 2,198 mobile subscribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 2005</td>
<td>3,544,147 fixed line and mobile subscribers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2006</td>
<td>4,000,191 fixed line and mobile subscribers</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
National telephone operators

- Vodacom
- Tigo (MIC Tz. Ltd)
- Celtel
- Zantel
- Tanzania Telecommunication Corporation Ltd (TTCL)

National Statistics

Population - 35 million (85% rural and 15% urban)
Size - 945,000 Sq. Km
GDP Per Capita - USD 317 (Bank of Tanzania Economic Review June 2006)
Genesis of Council

TCRA Act

The Consumer Consultative Council of the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA – CCC) was established under the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority Act No. 12 of 2003.

Members

- The Act provides for the Chairman and Vice Chairman and other eight members to serve as Councillors. The members of the Council were appointed by the Minister for Communications and Transport in the first half of 2004 and the Council became operational in July 2004.

- Pursuant to section 37 (5) of the TCRA Act, Councillors are required to have knowledge of the regulated goods and services (ICT and telecommunications, Broadcasting and Postal and Courier services), including the interests of:
  (a) low income, rural and disadvantaged persons/groups;
  (b) Industrial and business users;
  (c) Government and Community organisations
Tenure
Members serve the Council for three years but can be reappointed after the expiry of that period.

Core Functions
Section 38 (1) of the Act stipulates the core activities as:
- To represent the interests of consumers by making submissions to providing views and information to and consulting with Authority, (Regulator), Minister and Sector Ministries;
- To receive and disseminate information and views on matters of interest to consumers of electronic goods and services;
- To establish local, regional and sector consumer committees and consult with them;
- To consult with industry, government and other consumer groups.
Sources of Funding

Sources of funding are stipulated by the Act as follows:

a) Parliamentary Appropriations
b) TCRA Contributions
c) Private grants, donations, bequests and other contributions.

Financial Management

Section 39 (8) of the Act requires the Council to prepare a budget every financial year and submit to the Minister. Pursuant to section 39 (4) and (5) the Council is required to submit its Audited Accounts and Annual Report to the Minister before 30th September in that year.
STRUCTURE

Secretariat

To effectively implement its advocacy provide programme nationwide, the Council has established a Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary. The proposed staff establishment is presented in Figure 1.
The Council has powers to make its own rules for regulating its procedures and other matters relating to its functions. As a result, the Council articulated and implemented the following:

Committees
Set up five committees:
- ICT and telecommunications
- Broadcasting (Radio and TV)
- Postal and Courier services
- Public Education
- Administration and Finance
Each of these committees has a Chairman
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY (KEY DRIVERS)

Zonal Outreach Centres

Set up eight (8) zonal centres in the Country. Segmented the operational zone on the basis of the geography of the country, accessibility and viability.

Road Map (2006 – 2010)
Strategic Plan (Vision 2010)

Vision
Become a well-established and effective organization for advocating consumer rights and harmonizing business relations between key players in the regulated communications goods and services industry by 2010.

Mission
Protect the rights of consumers of regulated communications goods and services and to enhance better business relations through effective dialogue between policy makers, services providers and consumers.

Three impact based outputs:
Consumer empowerment strategy;
Institutional capacity building strategy;
Developing effective multi stakeholder dialogue.
Familiarization Visits

Visits made to showcase countries including Sweden, India, Malaysia, Singapore and Australia. Regional visits made to Kenya and Uganda. Local visits made to community telecentres in Tanzania and Uganda.

Institutional Relationships

Main actors at micro level consists of:

- **Government** – Policy marker and enact laws.
- **Regulator (TCRA)** – Licensor, enforcer, regulator for a level playing field.
- **CCC (Council)** – Advocate for Consumer protection rights and interests.
Figure 2 represents the three Main Actors which make up a Tripartite Forum/Dialogue.

Figure 2. Operational Relationships: Micro level Stakeholders

Main Actors at macro level are multi-dimensional (multi-stakeholders) and are presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Operational Relationships: Macro level stakeholders
Complaints Handling Procedure
A mechanism through which consumers will formally lodge their complaints has been established in collaboration with the Regulator (TCRA). A real life scenario depicts a complex flow of information.

Figure 4 represents a flow of information bottom up and topdown.
IMPLEMENTING CONSUMER ADVOCACY OUTREACHES

The core business of the Council is consumer rights protection achieved through consumer education and outreaches. The strategic thrust is to organize consumers of electronic and postal goods and services to defend their rights. This goal has been achieved through:

- Sensitization/ Consumer awareness Seminars
- Training of Trainers (ToTs) workshops for Animators (Champions)
- Consultative Workshops with key stakeholders, including operators, ICT Voluntary Associations, Media and Regulator.
- Consultative meetings with outreach animators (being planned)
- Lobby of Parliamentary Committee on Infrastructure
- Information sharing with Consumer Activists

OUTCOMES FROM OUTREACHES

A checklist of complaints from Consumer Stakeholders:

- High tariffs retail price of mobile telephone services;
- Unfair billing system by Cellular operators;
- Perceived fear of radiation due to high density of antennae;
- Skewed network roll out countrywide (more profitable versus less profitable areas) increasing internal digital divide;
- Cartelization by mobile phone operators which may lead to market price fixing (rigging) and oligopolistic tendencies;
- Weak machinery to enforce compliance to consumer regulations, consumer codes and anti-dumping laws;
- Inability by operators to disable stolen handsets from their network;
- Slowness to implement the Universal Access Fund and Digital Solidarity Fund;
- High tariffs by courier service providers;
- Broadcasting content and Internet material that are demand driven and fail to safeguard and promote core values of Tanzanian culture;
- Lack of warranty provision at the point of sale and inability by mobile phone Operators to demand disclosure of full subscriber information.
Note: The Regulator and Ministry are putting in place mechanisms to address issues and other market imperfections through a National ICT Policy and New Licensing Framework. In this process, the key role of CCC is consultative and increase pressure on SPs to promote consumer friendly business practices.

Other Insights
- Gather information on Consumer issues and/or complaints on operators' goods and services from a cross section of consumers.
- Exchanged notes on pertinent consumer issues in the communication sector;
- Used information to formulate plans of action;
- Utilized derived knowledge to develop customized training and consumer education programmes;
- Used seminars as entry points to establish rapport, gain cooperation and within grass of influential people;
- Identify grassroot animators (focus group);
- Provided platform to publicize TCRA activities participation of Regulator, Operators and Ministry in CCC sponsored public activities and consultative seminars have been crucial for disseminating knowledge on new technology and trends, clearance of mis information and/or mis representation of issues;
- Able to profile the buyer behavioural characteristics of a “typical consumer”;
- Gathered information from service providers on quality of service (QoS) and new products for rolling out.
- Identified areas for collaboration and networking with various stakeholders.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Publicity Campaigns
- Developed brochures
- Broadcasting airtime using local popular Radio programmes
- Press releases and Adverts in local papers
- Meeting the Press
- Published articles and reports in print and electronic media

Sensitization and ToT seminars
- Conducted eight (8) public seminars and five (5) country wide on a pilot basis.
- Organized and held five (5) ToT workshops in five zonal centres.

Utilization of Learnt Lessons
- Learned lessons from familiarization visits to show case countries and others and customized the lessons locally.

Pointers (benchmarks) for Initial Impact
- Consumer Empowerment at regional level is slowly emerging measured by participant’s enthusiasm, volunteering spirit by Animators to initiative independent local consumer groups/committees, social bonding networking among animators, synergizing local experiences feedback reports from seminar participants, TCRA, Media, Ministry and Parliamentary Committee on Infrastructure and individual ICT Consumer Activists.

Consultative Seminars
- Organized and held Consultative Seminars with Key stakeholders and greater involvement of the local media to report and educate the public.
CHALLENGES

Are listed as follows:

- The massive size of the Country (approx, 945,000 Sq. Km) with a thin secretariat has constrained effectively reaching to rural consumers. Implementation of strategic interventions requires a phase by phase and pilot approach;
- Novelty and newness of the Consumer Council model in Tanzania, has increased pressure to develop a more customized approach to effectively address consumer needs in Tanzania;
- Organize an "ill informed, misinformed, and/or under represented constituency to become a well informed force and increase its bargaining position with Operators;
- Harmonizing diverse interests of operators and consumers for mutual gains is a tough game and requires each party doing its part (meeting mutual obligations);

Challenges Continue....................

- Sustaining the viability of Council as an effective national advocacy agency requires a creative and investing in innovative programmes;
- Raising the pan territorial and regional visibility and profile of the Council requires developing multi-pronged advocacy strategy;
- Developing interventions for critical awareness on Consumer issues;
- Building animators capacity to execute the representational role of Council;
- Establishing benchmarks parameters for impact assessment;
- Customizing replicated models from showcases to address specific needs and demands relevant to Tanzania Communication Consumers;
Challenges continue

- Developing informational tools for measuring the impact of Council requires conducting an Impact Assessment study;
- Develop sector based programmes (schools/colleges, health, banking, tourism, etc);
- In collaboration with Regulator educate the media on Consumer rights protection.

THE WAY FORWARD

- Developing Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms for benchmarking results;
- Make a gradual progression from “general” consumer awareness to “critical” awareness to increase consumer negotiation skills for better and affordable services and better application on new technologies.
- Establish a Resource Centre for consumer information;
- Lobby parliamentarians and increase pressure on SPs to lower tariffs to affordable level.
- Expand consultative and representational roles of Council;
- Develop state-of-the art publicity materials including Council Logo, website, documentary, etc.
- Establish Consumer Committees at Regional and sector levels
THE WAY FORWARD continue.............................

- Expand the funding base including contributions from private sector;
- Make contributions to international communication organizations;
- Increase staffing at the Secretariat to meet programme expanding needs;
- Increase collaboration through joint sponsorship of programmes with Regulator;
- Initiate and explore areas for mutual collaboration and partnership with Regional consumer groups;
- Attract technical support by initiating bankable capacity building programmes;
- Facilitate the establishment of a local communication Media Association.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

- Building on an initial impact and sustaining the tempo requires a pragmatic approach and will be contingent on a convergence of factors including innovative tailored programmes, awareness creation and greater use of media houses.
- Real empowerment of target clientele is key success factor to mainstream less informed consumers and is achievable through education and representation.
- Council must increase its representational role of consumers within the Tripartite Forum.
- Build capacity for implementing Consumer Handling Procedure Mechanism.
- Build capacity for an internal knowledge and informational base on consumer issues.
- Expand national and international visibility of Council.

THANK YOU
COLORALLY:

Sources of information:
- Council Reports
- TCRA and Ministry Reports and publications
- Online Resources
- Info material from WSIS, Tunis
- Info materials gathered from showcase countries
- Local Media Publications.

Definition of Key Terms and Abbreviations

CCC - Consumer Consultative Council
TCRA - Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority
SPs - Service Providers
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
Consumer Animators - Consumer Agents /Champions
Secretariat Contact:

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* Construction of CCC Web Domain and Email in progress