



THE MONTHLY UPDATES ON CONSENT'S KEY ENGAGEMENTS

January, 2025



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1.0 PREAMBLE

CONSENT enthusiastically started the new year (2025) with commitment to drive the consumer protection and better business agenda. The team maximally utilized the month of January for conceptualization of priorities for consideration in the programming for the fiscal year 2025. In addition, the month of January provided numerous opportunities for strategizing and concretizing partnerships with likeminded entities both nationally and internationally.

Leveraging partnerships, CONSENT was able to actively participate in a number of local, national, regional and global engagements that further provided an opportunity to table consumer voices for discussion and hence inform programming and shaping the future of consumer protection in Uganda and beyond.

We applaud our partners including Food Safety Coalition Uganda (FoSCU), Bio vision Foundation, Humanist TV Africa, Food Rights Alliance, Seatini-Uganda, FIAN-Uganda, CEFROHT, GEDA-Uganda, Ministry of Agriculture Animal Husbandry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Food and Agricultural Organization(FAO), PELUM Association Regional Secretariat, Broederlijk(BD), Rikolto, ReXBA, BUCADEF, Codex Coordinating Committee AFRICA, Uganda National Bureau of standards, Uganda Communications Commission, DEEP SHIFT.AI and the media fraternity for journeying with us on the mission towards protecting consumers and facilitating better business.

To all our allies, we implore you to read through a snap shot of what we were able to engage in during the month of January 2025 as summarized in this first annual edition. We wish you the best as you explore our participation in the noble engagements.



2.0 EXPLORING THE MAJOR ENGAGEMENT

2.1. Participated in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) summit

The CAADP is a continental initiative that is focusing on enabling African countries to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty by raising economic growth through agricultureled development. The commitments in the CAADP are targets for reducing poverty and malnutrition, increasing productivity and farm incomes, improving the sustainability of agricultural production and use of natural resources. Through the CAADP, African governments agreed to allocate at least 10% of national budgets to agriculture and rural development, and to achieve agricultural growth rates of at least 6% per annum.

CONSENT actively participated in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme(CAADP) summit that was hosted in Kampala-Uganda from the 9th to the 11th January 2025. During the side event meetings, CONSENT's Chief Executive Officer Mr. Kimera Henry shared with the continental stakeholders the need to prioritize consumer empowerment and protection in bolstering sustainable food systems. He noted that once consumers are empowered, they will ably make informed food choices hence influencing production, marketing and distribution of safe and nutritious food.

In addition, CONSENT's Head of Programmes, Mr. Bwambale Bernard



Figure 1: Mr. Kimera sharing consumer perspectives during the CAADP meeting side event

implored the African governments to ensure harmonization and execution of food quality standards as well as other food related policy, legal and regulatory frameworks to guarantee the quality and safety of the food consumed at the continent. In his remarks, Bwambale urged that the quality and safety of some food stuffs in most African countries are still below standard thus increasing the consumers' risk to food borne diseases, malnutrition, food losses and lower economic growth.



Lastly, Mr. Bwambale advocated for mass awareness on food safety, capacity building of food system actors on optimal food handling practices, implementation of the legal and regulatory frameworks and enhancement of partnerships and coordination of food safety efforts in Africa.

2.2 Active involvement in the 25th session of the FAO/WHO CODEX Coordinating Committee for AFRICA

The Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally adopted food standards and related texts presented in a uniform manner. These food standards and related texts aim at protecting consumers' health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade. The publication of the



Figure 2: Mr. Bwambale Sharing perspectives on food quality and safety during the CAADP Meeting

Codex Alimentarius is intended to guide and promote the elaboration and establishment of definitions and requirements for foods to assist in their harmonization and in doing so to facilitate international trade.

In 1972, the FAO/WHO CODEX Coordinating Committee for Africa was established by the Codex Alimentarius Commission with a mandate to "exercise general coordination in the preparation of standards relating to the region of Africa. At its 50th anniversary, the coordinating committee held her 25th session hosted at Hotel Africana in Kampala from the 27th to the 31st January 2025.



Figure 3: The CCAFRICA25 Delegates pausing for a photo moment at Hotel Africana during the CCAFRICA25 meeting



CONSENT being a member of the Coordinating Committing was fully represented by Mr. Kimera Henry (Chief Executive officer) and Mr. Bwambale Bernard (Head of Programmes) at the noble 25th session of the committee. At this meeting, Mr. Kimera shared with the continental delegates the different approaches that CONSENT is employing to harvest consumer voices that have informed consumer protection initiatives and also contributed significantly in standards development in Uganda.

Some of the approaches shared by Kimera included; Consumer complaints' harvesting, media league sessions, radio and Television shows, consumer parliaments at grass root levels, regulators-service provider and consumer dialogues on consumer issues as well as grass roots consumer awareness and empowerment programmes. Lastly, he indicated the urgent need of effectively communicating and empowering stakeholders on standards as a critical step for adoption of the available standards.

2.3 Engagement in the African Civil Society Organizations' webinar on double standards in the exportation of the banned pesticides from the EU.

Spear headed by PELUM Association Regional Secretariat. Broederlijk Delen(BD) and Food Safety Coalition of Uganda(FoSCU), the civil society organizations in Africa organized a webinar to discuss the double standards in the exportation of the banned pesticides from the European Union to African countries. According to the CSOs, some of the pesticides that have been banned for use in the European Union are still being allowed to be manufactured and consequently exported to Africa a thing that compromises various internal policy, legal and regulatory frameworks such as the Basel convention.



Figure 4: The poster of the Webinar on toxic pesticides



Rotterdam convention, Stockholm convention, Bamako convention and the chemical strategy for sustainability among others.

2.4 Participated in the Ugandan Civil Society Organizations' media press conference on Highly Hazardous pesticides

Following the ongoing conversation and controversies on gross misuse of agrochemicals in Uganda, The Uganda based CSOs conducted a press conference to highlight and shade more light on the un judicious use of pesticides in the country. The presser was also leveraged to inform the public of the existing Highly Hazardous Pesticides that have even been banned for use in



Figure 5: Mr. Bwambale presenting on the effects of HHPs during the press conference at the SEATINI offices in Kampala

the countries of origin. On this, CSOs advised government to ban the importation of Highly Hazardous Pesticides.

At the press conference, the CSOs called upon government to ensure stringent regulation of the pesticides imported into the country. Furthermore, the CSOs called upon government to create mass awareness and build capacity of the food system actors on judicious use of safer agrochemicals. In addition, government was urged to promote safer and sustainable food production and preservation options so as to guarantee the safety of consumers.

2.5 Participated in the development of food safety guidance materials for SMEs in the beef and bovine milk value chains

Given the food safety concerns reported along the beef and bovine milk value chains, the Food and Agricultural Organization(FAO) in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Husbandry and Fisheries(MAAIF) and with funding from the SWISS government are executing a food safety project whose objective is to develop



comprehensive guidance materials for small and medium Enterprises(SMEs) in the beef and bovine milk value chains in Uganda.

CONSENT was appointed as a member of the project steering committee that oversees the development process and dissemination of the guidance materials to the different SMEs and other value chain actors. On the 15th of January 2025, CONSENT joined the rest of the project steering committee members at the meeting held at Fair Way Hotel in Kampala to discuss the structure and content of the beef and bovine milk value chain guidance materials.

Once the development of the guindace materials is completed, SMEs and other value chain actors shall be trained in good agronomic practices, good manufacturing practices and the Hazard Critical Control Points along the value chain so as to guarantee the safety of beef and beef products as well as the bovine milk and milk products in Uganda.



Figure 6: Members of the project steering committee meeting at Fairway hotel to discuss the food safety guidance materials

2.6 Partnership Engagements with REXBA and BUCADEF

In the month of January 2025, CONSENT took a deliberate step to strengthen her partnership with REXBA and BUCADEF following the commitments of the BULANGE declaration of 2024. The partnership is tailored towards leveraging each of the partners to strategically address food safety concerns in the 8 markets of the Kabaka and to jointly reach out to the business entities and consumers with awareness campaigns on food safety, consumer protection and better business. In addition, the partnership is to aid capacity



building of the food system actors on optimal food handling practices, strengthen food

safety and consumer protection related research and advocacy.

Through this partnership. CONSENT shall be in position undertake to numerous food safety, consumer protection and better business interventions in the 8 markets of the Kabaka including: Mulago, Dembe. Makerere, Nankulabye, Munaku, Namirembe, Katwe and Kibuye.



Figure 7: The CONSENT, REXBA and BUCADEF officials pause for a photo moment after the strategic meeting at REXBA offices in Kampala

2.7 Convened the Media league webinar

In the quest to strengthen the capacity of the media team on consumer protection, CONSENT organized a 3 hours' online webinar on the 31st January 2025 with an objective of building capacity of the media personnel on the topic *"Excessive consumption of fat and sugar, a risk to the cancer burden"*. The webinar was attended by **104** media personnel from across Uganda. Following this webinar, the media team developed different products such as articles, podcasts among others which they cascaded to consumers through radio messages, newspaper articles, blogs and online content among others.

2.8 Participated in the strategic meeting to strengthen agro ecology entrepreneurs and territorial forum

CONSENT joined other agro ecology promoting stakeholders on the 24th January 2025 to discuss agro-ecological entrepreneurship opportunities and scaling up uptake of agrological products in Uganda. The meeting was held at Kongoje agro



tourism farm in Wakiso District. From the meeting a deliberate resolution to form different committees to spear head the key agro ecological transition and adoption aame changers including; research and innovation. resource mobilization. agro ecology climate and animal health, advocacv and awareness, marketing and quality control.



Figure 8: Members of the quality assurance committee on agro ecological products pause for a photo moment after the meeting

At the meeting, a number of strategizes to bolster agro ecology were discussed some which included; agro-ecological products' branding, packaging, certification and compliance, market information and consumer awareness among others.

2.9 Conducted Television Shows

CONSENT conducted weekly live online TV shows on Humanist TV Africa every Friday from 11:00am to 12:00PM. The January talk shows focused on disseminating consumer concerns in the education, communication, health, Agri-food systems, transport and trade sectors respectively.

On the other hand, CONSENT also conducted two Television Shows on Family TV and Uganda Catholic TV primarily to discuss food safety concerns with focus on Highly Hazardous Pesticides that are being used in Uganda and yet banned in the countries of origin. The shows were organized to create awareness on the Highly Hazardous Pesticides and to advocate for their ban by the government. The shows were also leveraged to call upon government to implement the existing regulations on importation and judicious use of pesticides.



2.10. Participated in the CSO Retreat on National Budget Framework Paper (NBFP) 2025

From the 3rd to the 4th of January 2025, CONSENT represented by Mr. Baluku Yosia joined other Civil Society Organizations in a retreat at ESELLA country Hotel in Kampala organized by the Civil Society Budgetary Advocacy Group(CSBAG). The retreat focused on having a CSO discussion and perspective on the National Budget Framework Paper for the Financial Year 2025/2026.

The National Budget Framework Paper (NBFP) provides the link between the Government's overall policies, priorities and the Annual Budget. It lays out the fiscal policy framework and strategy for the budget year setting out how the Government intends to achieve



Figure 9: CSOs treat at ESELLA Country Hotel discussing the NBFP

its policy objectives over the medium term through the budget. The macroeconomic framework presented in the Budget Framework Paper forms the basis for resource projections and indicative expenditure allocations. It also forms the basis for the detailed estimates of revenue and expenditure that is laid before Parliament.

Following a thorough review and analysis of the NBFP, the CSOs at the retreat, developed and presented a number of program specific position papers to the respective parliamentary committees. These position papers were to inform further the financing priorities in the country.

3.0 CONCLUSION

January was such a busy month, full of learning, conceptualization of the fiscal year 2025, identification of forthcoming opportunities, founding-advancing and concretizing collaborations as well as strengthening the already existing partnerships.

During the month, CONSENT further appreciated the role of partnerships and collaboration, capacity building as well as optimal coordination in ensuring community outreaches and service delivery.



CONSENT

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