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## LEGAL CHALLENGES FACING THE CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL UNDER ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY IN REGULATING WATER UTILITIES IN NYAMAGANA DISTRICT

By

<sup>1</sup>Gosbert Julia M., <sup>2</sup>Dr. Fransisco Damas

<sup>1</sup>2nd Year LL.M Student. St. Augustine University of Tanzania: Malimbe Campus, Mwanza Tanzania.

<sup>2</sup>Doctor of Laws, St. Augustine University of Tanzania: Malimbe Campus, Mwanza Tanzania



### Abstract

This paper focuses on the Consumer Consultative Council (CCC), operating under the EWURA with a specific emphasis on analyzing water supply and sanitation issues. This council is a statutory entity responsible for safeguarding and advocating for consumer rights across sectors such as energy, water, communication and transportation particularly in Tanzania. The CCC is established within different regulatory bodies like EWURA, which oversees energy and water utilities. Their duties include issuing licenses, regulating tariffs, formulating policies, monitoring sector performance facilitating the resolution of disputes between services providers, consumers and sharing information related to their regulatory functions. <sup>i</sup> EWURA CCC is located in different EWURA offices in distinctive areas such as Nyamagana District, located in Mwanza region of Tanzania. This Council plays a vital role in shaping policies, monitoring service delivery and advocating for the rights of water users. The results show that, customers are not completely informed about the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council. Even if it is not fully understood, it is relevant because of how the regulated market in which it is intended to function is developing, not because of how well it performs. According to this logic, even if it performs well, it is ineffective because, consumers are not pleased. Its performance is impacted not just by the public's ignorance of it but also, by the fact that the regulated market has a high customer volume and the available labor is overworked.

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Corresponding author

**Gosbert Julia M**

### INTRODUCTION

The regulation of water supply and sanitation is particularly important since water entities are operating in a monopolistic business environment with limited competition that would otherwise derail the quality of services provided to consumers is adequate.<sup>ii</sup> Generally, EWURA regulates services related to water supply and sanitation in urban centers. The water supply and Sanitation authority may provide such services directly to consumers or through a service provider in a contractual arrangement. EWURA regulates Water Supply and Sanitation Authorities (WSSAs) in areas of technical and economic aspects, by regulating the quality of services standards, codes of practices, health safety and environmental (HSE) issues. EWURA prepared Water Wastewater Quality Monitoring Guidelines 2020 to assist utilities plan and monitoring water and water quality. Also,

EWURA has developed guidelines to facilitate tariff reviews transparently and predictably. The guidelines that are to determine and approve tariffs and charges include EWURA Water Tariffs Application and Rate Setting Rules 2020 and Guidelines for Preparing a Business Plan for Regulated Water Utilities (RWUs), 2016.<sup>iii</sup> These regulatory bodies were set up to control the market in the aforementioned sectors as they are linked to the nation's growth. As a result, of the continuous development and investment activities that have been made possible by opening doors to other nations. Similarly, the goal of stabilizing the economy was to reverse the deflation that precipitated the economic crisis. The portion of the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council pertaining to sanitation and water supply will be the subject of this study.



Section 34 of the EWURA Act,<sup>iv</sup> requires the Authority to attend complaints against suppliers of regulated goods or services about any matter connected with supply, possible supply or proposed supply of goods or services. Consumer complaints handling procedures focus on; consumer protection, and the need for service providers to provide reliable, quality and affordable goods or services. Preferences to amicable complaints settlements as opposed to litigation, having a speedier, just and less bureaucratic complaints handling procedure. The act also confers EWURA consumer consultative council EWURA CCC or an authorized representative of the aggrieved party to file a complaint. For example, in the case of EWURA CCC (COMA – RUVUMA) Vs Songea Water Supply and Sanitation Authority. Complaint Number.<sup>v</sup> Where on 22<sup>ND</sup> August 2019, the EWURA Consumer Consultative Council of Ruvuma through Office and Management Assistance (COMA) complained to the EWURA against Songea Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (Songea WSSA). The complainant was complaining about the respondents' act of issuing water bills without including therein a description of the unit price for every unit of the consumed water. Thus, causing a lot of disturbance to consumers who have been paying their bills without knowing the accuracy thereof. During the Mediation, it was settled and agreed that, the bills issued from September 2019, be included there in the description of the unite price for every unit of consumed water. Nyamagana District, located in the Mwanza region of Tanzania, presents a compelling case study for investigating the role and performance of CCC in the governance of water utility as one of the key urban centers in the country, Nyamagana faces various challenges related to water supply access, quality, and management, exacerbated by rapid population growth, urbanization, and environmental pressure.<sup>vi</sup> This study seeks to undertake a comprehensive assessment of laws, practices and outcomes associated with CCC under EWURA, with a specific focus on water utilities within Nyamagana District by examining the legal framework, institutional arrangements and practical implementation of consumer participation mechanisms. The study, therefore, aims at examining the extent and effectiveness to which CCC contributes to promoting consumer rights in Tanzania.

## THE CONCEPT OF CONSUMER

A consumer is a natural person who consumes items for personal rather than business objectives; someone who purchases goods or services for personal, family, or home use without intending to resell them.<sup>vii</sup> A person or corporation who acquires products or services from another firm is also considered a consumer.<sup>viii</sup> Can also refer to a specific subset of consumers; that instance, a person who purchases a product just for their personal use qualifies as a consumer, but a person who purchases a product for any kind of commercial gain does not.<sup>ix</sup> According to some academics, a consumer is anyone who buys or offers to buy goods and services for purposes other than reselling them; however, this definition excludes anyone who buys goods or services to be used in the manufacturing or production of goods or articles for sale.<sup>x</sup> Furthermore, a person who buys products and services from an enterprise for consumption is considered a consumer, as anybody

who uses those goods or services with the buyer's consent, regardless of whether the purchases or uses are for personal or business purposes.<sup>xi</sup> The term "consumer" can be referred to an unsophisticated individual who uses a non-commercial product,<sup>xii</sup> and includes "every modest one of us when we receive any service, eat, drink, read, travel, go shopping, and visiting the theatre or rest in bed. Consumers therefore, are generally poor, and a great number are very poor."<sup>xiii</sup> In an American case, of Aronberg et al. v. F.T.C.<sup>xiv</sup> The broad mass of people, including the credulous, the stupid, and the thoughtless, who frequently base their decisions on looks and first impressions rather than stopping to consider their options, were viewed as consumers. Section 2 of the Fair Competition Act,<sup>xv</sup> visualizes a consumer as the end user.

## THE NATURE AND THE ESSENCE OF CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL.

Consumer Consultative Council (CCC) is a special entity that represent the needs of energy and water consumers in Tanzania. These groups play a great role of ensuring that, utility providers like power and water companies listen to consumers and take their concerns seriously. CCC makes sure that, the rulers and policies around utilities are fair and protects consumer interests.<sup>xvi</sup> The nature of CCC is the committee established under EWURA that represents consumers' interests and act as forums for public consultation on energy and water utilities matters. CCC are advisory bodies that serves as a link between consumers and utility providers, contributing to the development of regulatory policies that are responsive to consumer concern. Therefore, the essence of CCC is to provide an avenue for the consumers to have their voices heard and their concerns addressed.<sup>xvii</sup>

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL;<sup>xviii</sup>

The Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Act, provides for the responsibilities, functions and the powers of the Council to mean;

- a) *To represent the interests of consumers by making submissions providing views and information to and consulting with the Authority, Minister and Sector Ministers.*
- b) *Receive and disseminate information and views on matters of interest to consumers of regulated goods and services.*
- c) *Establish regional and sector consumer committees and consult with them.*
- d) *Consult with industry, Government and other consumer groups on matters of interests to consumers of regulated goods and services.*
- e) *Establish local and sector consumer committees and consult with them.*

## RELEVANCY AND PERFORMANCE OF THE CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE



## COUNCIL UNDER ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY

The Council is considered to be relevant due to the necessity for consumer advocacy, protection, and established institutions. The results of the field research indicate that, the Consumer Consultative Council, whose chairman and assistant director are responsible for overseeing regulated services, is significant because of the roles that it plays in such services. The chairperson of EWURA CCC further retorted that, while the Consumer Consultative Council is relevant because of its functions, in order for it to carry out those functions, it should be a separate entity from EWURA, the regulator; it should also receive funding directly from the government. The chairperson also cited Australia, which has a number of independent councils in addition to the Australia Competition and Consumer Commission, which is an independent body that promotes good performance. Australian Consumer Consultative Councils have demonstrated efficacy because of the way they are designed and run.<sup>xix</sup>

The results from the general respondents demonstrate the relevance of the Consumer Consultative Council under EWURA, as 16 out of 20 respondents gave positive answers and just 4 gave unfavorable answers. It is also noteworthy that, a significant portion of respondents still believe the Council is vital even if they are unaware of the Council's responsibilities and operations. Since consumer protection cannot be disregarded, it is evident that, the Consumer Consultative Council is important. This is so because, they are the market and the driving force behind a nation's economic progress, consumers must be safeguarded. Therefore, its applicability should go beyond theory and be demonstrated by the steps it takes to promote and guarantee consumer safety in the water services. Therefore, it is evident from the comments that, the CCC is a pertinent in terms of services and consumer protection. It is appropriate to note that, the Council has participated in several consumer advocacy and protection initiatives over its eighteen years of its existence. Regarding its performance, the results from the field indicate that, the associations are not happy with the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council's performance. In an interview, a representative from MWAUWASA stated that, the challenges facing the council extend beyond the water sector to include the energy sector as well,<sup>xx</sup> where complaints about incorrect billing, unanswered consumer complaints, and slow customer service are all present. Additionally, the council's activities are not clearly visible to the public, and service providers disregard consumer codes in favor of acting on their own volition.

The researcher concludes from these responses that, even though, these associations have members who are also consumers, many consumers do not recognize the Consumer Consultative Council because of its shortcomings in representing and defending them. The pepper reveals that, many respondents in general are dissatisfied with the Council's performance. Most respondents indicated that, their dissatisfaction stems from the fact that, they

frequently deal with water problems that, have not been resolved and are now commonplace.

The satisfaction of the Consumer Consultative Council was also surveyed in this study, and some advocates, attorneys, and magistrates were asked to respond. It was found that, the council's performance was viewed as both partially satisfactory and partially unsatisfactory. The lawyers and legal officials responded that, they are happy with the Consumer Consultative Council under the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority. Some responded expressing dissatisfaction with the performance, while one did not respond because of the sense of ignorant about the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council. The magistrates addressed a few concerns regarding cleanliness and water supply, but the issues have been forwarded to the appropriate authorities. This demonstrates that, the complainants are unable to acknowledge the EWURA CCC's role as an appropriate venue for representing them in their concerns.

## LEGAL CHALLENGES FACING CONSUMER CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

The operation of the Consumer Consultative Council in Nyamagana is a critical aspect in safeguarding consumer rights and ensuring accountability among services providers. However, the effectiveness of the CCC is frequently hampered by various legal challenges and barriers as presented in subsections below.

### Independence of EWURA CCC

The results obtained from MWAUWASA and EWURA officials who participated in this study provide that, the CCC has the duties and responsibilities effective services provision to the consumers of water utilities as provided by the law.<sup>xxi</sup> However, there are some aspects which compromise their independence in performing the intended functions. Based on the results obtained through interview it was noted that, the CCC are established by the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) Act, hence this raises concerns about their independence and ability to effectively represent consumer interests without interference from EWURA or utility providers. EWURA controls the council which makes it depend on it in daily performance. Moreover, there is also the issue of the Mwanza Urban Water and Sewerage Authority (MWAUWASA). This is a parastatal organization responsible for providing water and sanitation services in the city of Mwanza. According to the respondent, MWAUWASA has its water consumer engagement mechanisms, which to some extent may provide the same consumer protection and representation as the CCC does. So, this is a big challenge to CCC as may lack a sense of autonomy and hinder the ability of CCC to enforce consumer rights effectively. From the findings it can be established that, despite the fact that, the CCC were established under the law, still there are some aspects which compromises its independence.

### Insufficient Legal Framework

The legal framework regulating CCC may be inadequate, leaving gaps in the legal provisions that undermine the effectiveness of CCC in protecting consumer rights and promoting accountability.

This may be characterized by weak enforcement that, the CCC lacks the legal authority to impose sanctions or penalties on utility providers for non-compliance with regulatory requirements, which could weaken their ability to enforce consumer rights. This was substantiated by the participant who pinpointed that; the legal environment is a double – edge sword for consumers in the water utilities sector. On the other hand, there are laws intended to protect consumers, but on the other hand, these laws are often enforced due to legal loophole or weak regulatory oversight. For example, the legal process for challenging unfair practice by water utilities is cumbersome, requiring consumer to navigate complex administrative and legal procedures. This not only delays justice but also, place a significant financial burden on consumer, particularly those from lower income households. The lack of accessible legal recourse is a major barrier to the realization of consumer rights. Therefore, since CCC in respect to water utilities is regulated by the EWURA laws and regulations it cannot address all aspects of water utilities effectively.

### Limited Consumer Participation

Consumer participation is the key aspect in the service provision. This is because, provision of services depends much on the level of satisfaction of the respective consumers. Hence, at some point in time they must participate in certain aspects such as awareness, provision of opinion for service improvement and so forth. However, in this paper it was revealed that, level of consumer participation is not satisfactory because, most of the people lack understanding about CCC. The results obtained through interview shows that, there may be low levels of consumer awareness and participation in CCC activities, which could hamper the councils' ability to adequately represent consumer interests. Also, insufficient resources in Mwanza region may lack the necessary resources, such as funding and personnel, to effectively engage with consumers and address their concerns. Moreover, limited consumer participation may lead to a lack of checks and balances, reducing the accountability of water utilities. Without active consumer involvement, there is less pressure on utilities to be transparent in their operations, potentially leading to inefficiencies or misuse of resources.

Thus, limited participation of the consumers affects the effectiveness of the CCC since even in case of disputes arising between stakeholders such as services providers and consumers most of the disputes are not referred to the CCC. Moreover, limited participation of consumers affects proper discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the CCC. Based on these findings it can be established that the lack of active consumer participation, their concerns, needs and preferences may not be adequately represented or addressed. This can result in services that do not fully meet consumer needs or fail to consider important aspect like affordability, accessibility and service quality. Also, it can be established that, when consumer feel less involvement in the CCC it leads to loss of trusts hence reducing the willing to engage with these bodies or even in resistance to policies and initiatives introduced by the authorities.

### Inadequate Specialized Expertise

Each sector requires specialized knowledge and expertise. For a multisector body, it is challenging to maintain a comprehensive understanding and expertise in all the sectors it covers. This impacts the quality of regulation and advocacy. Expertise is highly needed because, it helps the stakeholders to fully realize the roles of CCC in enhancing service provisions. The results obtained in this study acknowledges the roles of specialized expertise as one of the participants pinpointed that without specialized knowledge in water utility operations, engineering, finance and legal frameworks, CCC members may struggle to effectively negotiate with utilities and regulatory bodies. This results in less favorable outcomes for consumers, as the council may be unable to challenge technical or complex proposals that, could negatively impact service quality or affordability. On the other hand, it was also noted that, specialized expertise is necessary for providing informed input on policy and regulatory changes. Without this CCC may fail to influence policies in a way that protect consumers' interests. For example, they might miss opportunities to advocate for regulations that ensure fair pricing or improved service quality.

The form of the findings of this study can be established that specialized knowledge is essential for understanding and mitigating risks within the water sector such as those related to infrastructure aging, climate change or financial instability. Without expertise, the CCC may overlook these risks, leaving consumers vulnerable to service disruptions, unsafe water supply or unjust cost increases. Thus, the lack of specialized expertise within consumers' consultative councils for water utilities can significantly undermine their ability to protect and promote consumer interests. It limits their effectiveness in advocacy, policy influence, monitoring and decision – making, ultimately leading to suboptimal outcomes for consumers.

### Insufficient Resource Allocation

Resource allocation significantly impacts the performance the CCC as it influences the councils' ability to carry out its designated functions effectively. This is because, adequate allocation of resource ensures that, the CCC can hire and retain qualified staff with the necessary expertise in water utilities, consumer rights and regulatory frameworks. Hence without sufficient resources, the councils struggle to maintain a knowledge and skilled workforce, leading to inefficiencies in handling consumer complaints, analyzing technical proposal and advocating for consumer rights. Despite of the roles of resource allocation to CCC still there are challenges related to resource allocations as perceived by one participant who pinpointed that, sometimes there are situation when funds are directed towards less critical activities, when essential areas like consumer outreach, research and monitoring are underfunded. For example, excessive spending on administrative costs or non- essential projects diverts resource away from core functions such as consumer education and advocacy. Also, it was shown that, there are challenges related to the insufficient funds for hiring and retaining qualified staff. This leads to the understaffing, where the CCC lacks the personnel needed to handle consumer





complaints, conduct research or monitoring water utilities performance effectively.

Thus, based on the findings of this paper, it can be established that, resources allocation is a key aspect in enhance performance of the CCC. However, there are challenges in managing resources effectively across multiple sectors can be challenging. The allocation of financial, human, and technical resources needs to be carefully balanced to ensure that all sectors receive adequate attention and support.

#### **Conflict of Interests**

The findings of this paper show that, EWURA is an entity which brings together stakeholders from different sectors associated with water and energy utilities. However, each sector has its roles to play in enhancing effective service delivery, the presence of multiple sectors regulated by one entity sometimes lead to the presence of conflict of interest. This is shown where one sector prioritizes implementation certain program and other sector comes up with certain recommendations which are contrary to other sector, hence leading to the operational and functional challenges of the EWURA CCC. Not only that but also, there is a challenge on creation of balance between interests of different stakeholders is another problem facing the EWURA CCCs.

#### **Regulatory Overlap and Gaps**

In this paper, it was also revealed that, there are regulatory gaps overlaps and gaps in the functioning of the EWURA CCC. This situation happens specifically the existing laws laid down some principles and in one way or another conflicts. There is a tendency of some provision of law to have conflicting interpretation and this affects the performance of duties and functions of the CCC. Normally regulators provide the medium for setting producer standards and code with the participation of procedures and consumer representative. Once the standards and codes are agreed upon, producers and their consumers are expected to enforce them. Thus, presence different sectors regulated under one entity leads to the presence of gaps since how water services are regulated can be same as how energy utilities are regulated in in terms of services delivery, pricing available of services.

#### **Consumer Representation and Advocacy**

Representing consumers in multiple sectors means understanding and addressing a wide range of issues, from pricing and service quality to accessibility and sustainability. Ensuring that, consumer rights are protected across all sectors can be a significant challenge. The participants who participated in this study were of the view that CCC serve as platform where consumer's interests are represented, by actively engaging with water utilities and the regulator, the CCC advocates for fair treatment, reasonable tariffs and quality service delivery. This ensures that, consumer concerns are heard and addressed at higher decision-making levels. However, there is low attainment of this goal for the CCC operating in Nyamagana District. Moreover, another participant pinpointed that Therefore, overall, the complexity and diversity of issues, expertise, and interests involved in multiple sectors make it challenging for EWURA CCC to function effectively as a

multisectoral body. The CCC amplifies the voice of consumers, particularly in discussion around policy formulation, pricing and service standards. This would help to balance the power dynamics between consumers and utilities, ensuring that consumer needs are not overshadowed by the commercial interests of utilities.

Therefore, it can be established based on the finding that EWURA CCC is an entity in charge with the responsibility of managing and handling consumers' complaints. Despite the fact that, roles, duties and functions that it has in enhancing effective service provision, the consumer consultative councils face a number of challenges as pinpointed early.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The Consumer Consultative Council (CCC) under Energy and Water Utility Regulatory Authority (EWURA) plays a pivotal role in representing consumer interests, particularly in the water supply and sanitation sectors. The council's mandate to advocate for consumer rights, provides feedback on regulatory frameworks, and ensures accountability in service delivery is crucial in sectors characterized by significant public interest and essential service delivery. While it has made significant contributions to the society, there is a room for improvement in terms of resources, authority, and engagement. Addressing these challenges may not only strength the council's roles but also, enhances the overall regulatory environment, leading to better services delivery and greater consumer satisfaction. The future effectiveness of the CCC will depend on continued commitment from all stakeholders, including regulatory authorities, service providers, and the consumers themselves. As pointed earlier, the regulatory authority works on behalf of the consumers as the regulator within the water sector. The law establishing the regulatory authority also establishes the Consumer Consultative Council giving it legal mandate. With the Fair Competition Commission, the Judiciary and the regulator in place, the paper was pinpointed to critically examine out the Consumer Consultative Council under Energy and Water Utilities whether consumers are served and presented effectively. The paper focused solely on Consumer Consultative Council under the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authorities with a case study of Nyamagana District in Mwanza.

The analysis presented in this paper reveals that, the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authorities Consumer Consultative Council is not well-recognized by consumers. Many consumers are unaware of its existence, responsibilities, and functions. This lack of awareness hinders the Council's effectiveness in consumer advocacy and protection. If consumers and other stakeholders become more familiar with the Council's roles and functions, they will be more likely to engage with the institution, potentially enhancing its performance. Additionally, the findings indicate that, the Consumer Consultative Council involves stakeholders only partially in its consumer advocacy and protection efforts. Consumer associations, which represent many consumers, reported that they are not sufficiently engaged by the Council in its projects. These associations could play a crucial role in raising awareness and educating consumers, but their exclusion suggests the Council



is not fully fulfilling its consumer protection and advocacy duties. This lack of involvement contributes to the Council's suboptimal performance.

Water is a key sector in nation development, and the findings confirm the relevance of the Consumer Consultative Council. The Council operates across multiple sectors and provide their service free of charge. While the regulator oversees the sector's free-of-charge activities with support from other institutions, the Consumer Consultative Council plays an important role in advocating for consumer interests and helping the regulator fulfil its mission. For the Council to demonstrate its relevance, it needs to increase public awareness of its existence and engage more actively with consumers and stakeholders in sectors like water, energy and transport. The Council's performance is hindered by ongoing complaints related to water supply, sanitation, and services, despite the existence of complaint-handling procedures. These procedures, however, are cumbersome, and the Council should involve consumers and stakeholders in decisions affecting them, such as pricing and billing, to reduce complaints. Additionally, the Council's ability to address complaints effectively is constrained by financial dependence on the regulator, limiting its autonomy.

Furthermore, the legislation that established the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council lacks provisions to ensure its full independence. This undermines the Council's autonomy in representing consumers and stakeholders within the water sector. The findings suggest that the Council and the regulator follow the same rules for handling consumer complaints, highlighting the need for legal reforms to enable the Council to operate independently. In conclusion, simply having laws and institutions in place is insufficient; they must be fully implemented to guarantee consumer protection and representation. The law establishing the Council outlines its functions, but in practice, these functions are not fully realized, making it difficult for the Council to succeed. Although the Council handles consumer matters as stipulated in the EWURA complaint-handling procedures, its performance is overshadowed by the existence of the courts.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings the paper recommends that, consumers should actively participate in public consultations and forums organized by the CCC and other relevant bodies. Engaging in these platforms provides an opportunity to voice concerns and contribute to discussions on service quality and policy changes. Moreover, the paper recommends that, consumers should make efforts to educate themselves about their rights and responsibilities regarding water supply and sanitation services, by enhancing timely payment of water bills by adhering to available regulations and the set tariffs. Also, the study recommends that, consumers must understand tariff structures, services standards, and complaint mechanisms to proper forum.

The paper also recommends that, the government should provide enough support to the CCC by providing an adequate funding and

resources that would to enhance its capacity to upheld consumer rights effectively. Moreover, it is recommended that, government needs to create capacity building initiatives for CCC members and other stakeholders, including training in regulatory process, consumer rights, and technical aspects of water and sanitation services.

The paper also recommends that, the government should ensure that, consumers perspectives gathered by the CCC are Integrated into policy-making processes. This can be facilitated through regular interactions between the CCC and relevant government departments. This will enhance promotion of transparency in the regulatory process, clear communication of policy decisions, tariff changes, and service quality standards.

The paper also recommends that, the law reform commission should consider enhancing the legal mandate of the CCC, providing it with more authority to influence regulatory decisions and ensure compliance by service providers instead of depending on EWURA as the regulator. Also, the study recommends that, there should be an inclusive legislation to develop and support legislation that prioritizes equitable access to water and sanitation services. The legislative body should also ensure that, consumer protection laws are robust and comprehensive.

Since the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority Consumer Consultative Council (EWURA CCC) is only partially recognized, efforts to raise public awareness should be intensified, especially among consumers' association like the Tanzania Medium and Small Truck Owners. These efforts should focus on informing them about the Council's existence, responsibilities and functions while also educating them on consumer rights, how to address consumer rights violations and the complaint handling processes. By educating members of these associations, EWURA CCC can collaborate more closely with them to raise awareness within their communities and involve them in the processes of consumer protection and advocacy. Additionally, this educational outreach should extend to schools, colleges and universities across the country.

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