



WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY 2023

**EMPOWERING CONSUMERS THROUGH
CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS.**

Campaign Pack

INTRODUCING WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

Each year, the consumer movement celebrates 15 March as World Consumer Rights Day, to raise global awareness about consumer rights and needs. Launched in 1983, World Consumer Rights day is coordinated by Consumers International and recognised worldwide. It raises awareness and drives meaningful change on pressing challenges faced by consumers.

Consumers International connects and engages our Members - 200 consumer advocacy groups in over 100 countries across the world - around a core topic. In the past, Members have held events, engaged with their local media, produced reports, advocated to national governments, influenced companies, and held direct conversations with consumers. Previous themes include: [Fair Digital Finance](#) (2022), [Trusted Smart Products](#) (2019), [Antibiotics off the menu](#) (2016), [Healthy Diets](#) (2015).

In leading World Consumer Rights Day, we give our Members the tools they need to run a successful campaign. This campaign pack is one of those tools. It provides important information on our 2023 theme, terminology, current work Members are undertaking, and suggested campaigning and influencing activities.

BE PART OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT



For World Consumer Rights Day, Members typically hold events, engage with local media, produce reports, advocate to national governments, influence business, and connect with consumers. **By joining us, your organisation will:**

- **Strengthen** national campaigns by bringing a global perspective to local problems.
- **Learn** from consumer associations across the world.
- **Amplify** the voice of your organisation to a global audience.

40 YEARS OF IMPACT

In March 2023, the consumer movement will celebrate the 40th year of World Consumer Rights Day. Take a look at the impact we've had over the years.

1983

THE FIRST WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

Consumer Rights activist, Anwar Fazal proposed the idea of an international day to promote the rights of consumers. World Consumer Rights Day was established, to be held annually on 15 March.

2007

UNETHICAL DRUG PROMOTION:

Led by Consumers International, the consumer movement united against **unethical drug promotion**, calling on governments to put an end to unscrupulous marketing practices by pharmaceutical companies, and improve consumer access to reliable, transparent drug and health information.

2015

HEALTHY DIETS #FOODTREATYNOW

Consumers International called on the World Health Organisation for an International Convention to Protect and Promote Healthy Diets. Highlights included the Consumers Union of Argentina meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican to present our campaign and recommendations for a **#FoodTreatyNow**.

2016

ANTIBIOTICS OFF THE MENU

We spotlighted our **'Antibiotics of the Menu'** campaign. More than 228,000 people joined us in writing to CEOs of fast-food chains demanding commitments to limit antibiotic use. Following calls from across consumer and environmental rights groups, we saw McDonalds announce plans to eliminate the use of antibiotics from its global chicken supply chain.

2022

FAIR DIGITAL FINANCE

90+ Members carried out diverse campaigns to promote Fair Digital Finance, sharing our message with millions of consumers worldwide. We brought together over 600 high level leaders at our **Fair Digital Finance Forum**. Together with 11 of our Members, we launched our Buy Now Pay Later statement. Our call has resulted in key change, with the Australian government making commitments to regulation.

In 2022, diverse campaigns led by our Members included:

- **Consumer Affairs (India)** organising a rural outreach programme across 75 villages.
- **ADICAE (Spain)** setting up information stalls in 16 cities, bringing the call for fair finance directly to citizens across the country.
- **ADECOR (Rwanda)** organising meetings with key stakeholders, pushing for stronger regulation on privacy and data-sharing.
- **Consumer Council of Fiji** holding a high-level dialogue to promote their recently launched financial literacy programme.

2023 FOCUS: ENERGY

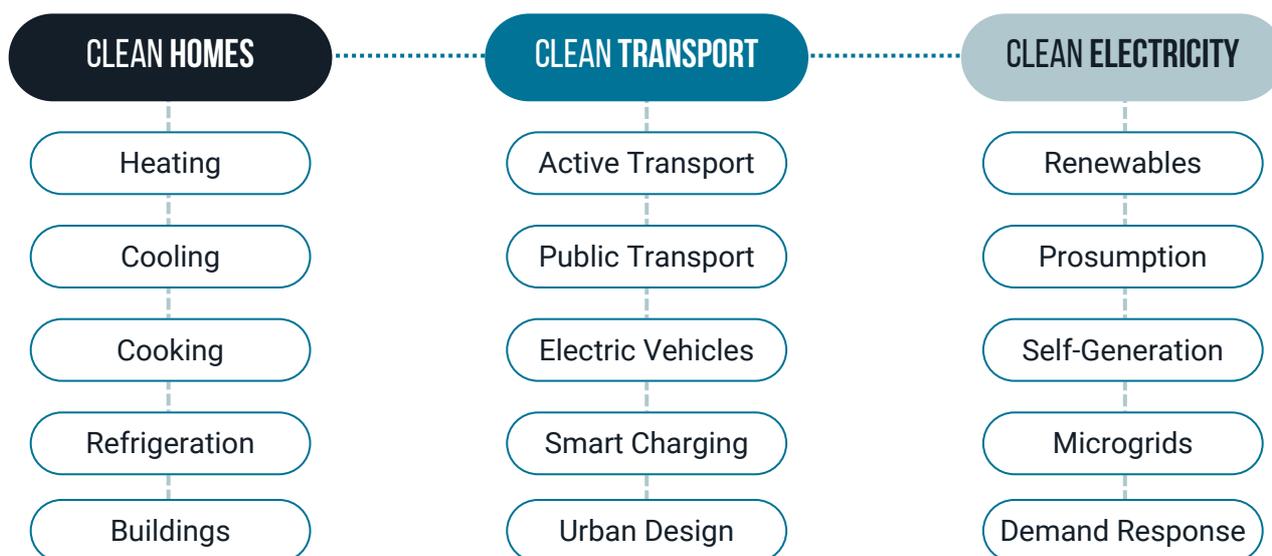
EMPOWERING CONSUMERS THROUGH CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITIONS



Following consultation with our Members, we will unite around the theme '**Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transitions**'.

We believe global consumer dialogue and action around energy is urgently needed for two key reasons. First, **global energy prices are set to rise by 50% by the end of 2022** and will stay high in 2023. Together with food and finance price increases, consumers everywhere are radically changing their lifestyles to meet their essential needs. In our latest [Member insights survey](#), over 80% reported that consumers are adjusting their budgets to pay their energy bills. Second, increasing access to **affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy will play a major part in averting catastrophic climate change**, with consumption shifts estimated to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions by 40-70%.

Action to empower consumers centres around increasing access to clean energy within three core domains: clean homes, clean transport and clean electricity supply.





CONSUMER EMPOWERMENT AND PROTECTION IN ENERGY TRANSITIONS

CONSUMERS INTERNATIONAL'S STORY OF CHANGE

Consumers International has worked on energy for almost sixty years, campaigning and advocating on issues such as affordable, reliable and safe energy supply, fuel poverty, energy efficiency, accountable markets, clear billing and tariffs and new developments such as demand-side management and smart meters.

As the climate crisis escalates, and the need to shift towards renewable energy systems becomes more urgent, Consumers International has stepped-up our efforts to put energy transitions on the agenda for consumer advocacy. In 2015, we successfully campaigned for the inclusion of "universal access to clean energy" in the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP), aligning international consumer law with Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7). In 2022, we collaborated with Member States at the Sixth Session of UNCTAD's Intergovernmental Group of Experts (IGE) on Consumer Protection Law and Policy to secure a spot for 'Consumer Protection and the Energy Transition on next year's agenda.

Through World Consumer Rights Day 2023, we will build upon this work, galvanising leaders, policymakers and consumers in the journey towards faster, fairer change.

Coming together, we aim to support consumers through the cost-of-living crisis and promote access to sustainable energy on a global scale.

OUR MEMBERS IMPACT WORLDWIDE

Alongside Consumers International, our Members already have years of action under their belt supporting consumers worldwide in the transition towards clean energy systems.

Our analysis and consultations with Members have demonstrated a firm commitment towards driving impact in consumer empowerment and protection in energy transitions.

Across the three core domains of clean homes, clean transport and clean electricity supply, we have seen Members taking innovative actions to educate, protect and empower consumers in their countries.



CLEAN HOMES

- **Consumentenbond (Netherlands)** run a renewable energy collective of over 100,000 consumers, a comparison tool for sustainable energy and an integrated audit and advice service for upgrading to a more sustainable home.
- **Consumer Council of Zimbabwe** implemented a joint consumer education programme with the energy regulator ZERA and run campaigns on clean-cooking in urban areas.

CLEAN TRANSPORT

- **Which? (UK)** are engaging with the UK government to push for improvements to public electric vehicle charging infrastructure, to support people in making the switch to electric vehicles.
- **Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group (India)** is building people-powered narratives in the fight for clean, equitable and accessible transport.

CLEAN ELECTRICITY

- **YACP (Yemen)** is campaigning for the safe use of solar energy systems as a solution to energy access problems, especially during times of conflict and unrest.
- **ODECU (Chile)** works with the government on reducing Chile's reliance on coal, currently the main source of electricity generation in the country.

THE CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE

We want to see energy systems that are:

Sustainable - This means a rapid and significant scaling-up of renewable energy deployment, enhanced energy efficiency, and clean electrification of end-uses.

Inclusive and just - This means that people everywhere are able to access energy services that meet their basic needs fairly and equitably, and that the most vulnerable and disadvantaged are not left behind.

Empowering consumers to take action - and providing them with strong **protection** as they do so - is key to realising this vision.

EMPOWERING CONSUMERS IN ENERGY TRANSITIONS

We all wield power as marketplace actors. We are all consumers of energy services, and as consumers, we have the potential to take action that accelerates clean energy transitions. The third part of the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report estimates that demand-side changes could reduce greenhouse gas emissions up to 70% by 2050. In practice, this means consumers everywhere making changes to how they travel, how they cook, and how they heat, cool and power their homes.

However, the opportunity for consumers to accelerate clean energy transitions is currently being missed. Consumers need to be supported and **empowered** to overcome consistent technological, infrastructural, financial, regulatory and knowledge related barriers, which stand in the way of transformative action.

To empower consumers in taking action, we should consider the essential needs of consumers on the journey towards consumer action, and the barriers they face at each stage:

- **Knowledge, Values and Awareness** – Consumers understand the need and opportunities for change.
- **Availability and Affordability** – There are affordable options available in the market for consumers to choose.
- **Reliability and Safety** - Consumers trust that new solutions will reliably and safely deliver the services they want and need.
- **Implementation** – Consumers do not face burdensome processes when investing in and installing solutions.
- **Use** – Consumers are enabled to use new systems or technologies effectively and efficiently.

- **Repair and Redress** – Consumers are protected by strong guarantees and are able to access adequate maintenance, repair and redress.

[Read more in our Snapshot on Consumer Empowerment in Clean Energy Transitions.](#)

In the lead up to World Consumer Rights Day, our focus will be on building global solutions that help consumers overcome these barriers. When creating your advocacy demands to local and national government, to businesses, and to other energy stakeholders, think about the interventions that are needed to overcome barriers at each stage of the consumer journey. **We are eager to promote Member campaigns which demonstrate the ways consumer advocacy can remove barriers to action.**

PROTECTING CONSUMERS IN ENERGY TRANSITIONS

In a rapidly evolving market, consumers will be required to take a more proactive role in making complex and often expensive decisions regarding their energy use. It is vital that **consumer protection** is held as a key priority.

We believe that action from consumer advocates, decision-makers and other stakeholders can ensure that consumers are protected in the transition.

A consumer focussed energy transition is one where the 11 legitimate consumer needs established by the United Nations are upheld

1. Access to essential goods and services.
2. Protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged.
3. Protection from hazards to health and safety.
4. Promotion and protection of economic interests.
5. Access to adequate info for informed choice.
6. Education on ESE consequences of choices.
7. Effective consumer dispute resolution.
8. Free to form consumer groups.
9. Promotion of sustainable consumption patterns.
10. Protections when using ecommerce.
11. Privacy and flows of information.

The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection lay out the relationship between consumer protection and access to clean energy

"Member States should promote universal access to clean energy as well as formulate, maintain or strengthen national policies to improve the supply, distribution and quality of affordable energy to consumers according to their economic circumstances. Consideration should be given to the choice of appropriate levels of service, quality and technology, regulatory oversight, the need for awareness raising programmes and the importance of community participation."



OUR GLOBAL CONSUMER CAMPAIGN

Consumers International's campaign strategy focusses on how consumer advocacy can raise awareness and mobilise change among energy stakeholders on behalf of consumers around the world.

Our World Consumer Rights Day campaign strategy will centre around **three** key actions:

DIALOGUES WITH ENERGY LEADERS

During the week of World Consumer Rights Day, our campaign will bring together energy leaders through a series of high-level dialogues.

These impactful discussions will focus on the role of consumer protection and empowerment in clean energy transitions. This will support our vision that the changing needs of consumers in a clean energy transition are reflected in strong consumer protection laws and policies, globally.

We will shortly be sharing invitations to join these dialogues and encourage you to share across your networks.

CLEAN ENERGY ADDRESS

In the coming months, we'll be calling on all Consumers International Members to participate in our Clean Energy Address, a video collating Members' demands to energy leaders and putting forward your vision for a clean and just energy future.

AMPLIFYING MEMBER ACTIVITY

The impact of World Consumer Rights Day is driven from the ground-up by the regional and local work of our Members. As you launch campaigns around the world, Consumers International will take a leading role in showcasing the impact and reach of those activities in empowering consumers in energy transitions.

We will amplify activity across our social media, stakeholder and Member networks.

Through a multimedia mapping tool, we will connect our Members' global campaigns, demonstrating that while consumers across the world face a diverse range of challenges and opportunities, we are united in our call for a fast, fair and accountable transition.

GET INVOLVED

Our Members are essential to building a dynamic, impactful global campaign. From the local insight and knowledge you provide, Consumers International can better understand the change needed at a local level while sharing a unified message worldwide.

ACTIVATE A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Your national campaign will be part of a global picture that will raise the voice of consumer advocacy within discussions on energy transitions.

We encourage and support Members to carry out activities on, and in the lead up to 15 March to help consumers adopt practices which accelerate clean energy transitions. In light of the varied nature of the issues, energy systems and supply across economies, we look forward to seeing diverse and innovative Member activity. Please utilise the resources, guidance and engagement opportunities laid out within this pack for your national campaign.

National campaigns could see Members:

- **Launching dialogues with national stakeholders** on improving energy efficiency labelling with national stakeholders.
- **Running education campaigns** which help consumers identify greenwashing or misleading claims when engaging with energy services.
- **Leading tailored community workshops** on clean household energy use, such as clean cookstoves.
- **Engaging with media and decision makers** to call for clean and affordable public transport.
- Help consumers manage rising prices by **providing accessible information** about energy bills.

LINK UP WITH OUR GLOBAL MOVEMENT

Consumers International will support members to bring national action to a global audience.

Stay tuned and look out for our:

- **Member briefing calls** (*dates announced shortly*)
- **2023 WCRD Resource Pack**, including:
 - influencing collateral,
 - communications and social media assets,
 - press liaison material,
 - Official World Consumer Rights Day branding and logo.

CONTACT US

Contact wcrd@consint.org for the following:

- More information, campaign updates and enquiries
- To inform us on your planned campaign activities
- To share your organisation's campaign lead or point of contact, to be added to our World Consumer Rights Day distribution list

You can also reach the team on Signal.

Don't forget to share your plans with Consumers International at wcrd@consint.org so we can share your work and coordinate for maximum impact.



**CONSUMERS
INTERNATIONAL**

COMING TOGETHER
FOR CHANGE

APPENDIX: LEARN MORE

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 7

Access to affordable, reliable and sustainable modern energy has long been recognised as a key priority for global action, as shown by the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7). Exclusively focussed on energy, it aims to increase the allocation of renewable energy globally, double efficiency improvements, advance research and expand infrastructure by its 2030 goal.

We are off-track in meeting these goals:

- **Access** – the world's population with access to electricity rose from 83% in 2010 to 91% in 2020, but rates of electrification have slowed. Meeting the 2030 target requires increasing the number of new connections to 100 million a year. At current rates of progress, the world will reach only 92% electrification by 2030.
- **Clean cooking** – the share of the global population with access to clean cooking fuels and technologies rose to 69% in 2020, having dropped to around 2.4 billion in 2020 from three billion people in 2010.
- **Renewable energy** – to help reach global net zero energy emission targets by 2050 the world needs to accelerate 30% of Total Final Energy Consumption (TFEC) by 2030, up from 18% in 2019.
- **Energy Efficiency** – global annual improvements in energy intensity averaged around 1.9% between 2010 - 2019, but we need to intensify efforts to reach the average annual rate of improvement by 3.2%.

RESOURCES AND READING

- Read our latest [Snapshot](#) on Consumer Empowerment in Clean Energy Transitions
- Read UNCTAD's recent report, '[Access by consumers to essential services: Energy, water and sanitation](#)', which provides background on the emerging trends and policy options to realise the ambitions of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, focusing on the key requirements for inclusive and affordable access to essential services.
- Read the International Energy Agency's 2022 '[World Energy Outlook](#)' which provides data, analysis and critical insights into global energy supply and demand in different scenarios and the implications for energy security, climate targets and economic development.
- Read the International Panel on Climate Change's [Working Group III report](#), which examines in detail the scope for [demand-side changes](#) to contribute to climate change mitigation, and the role of [energy system transformation](#).

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Clean energy: Clean energy should be defined as energy from renewable sources that produce no direct emissions.

Direct emissions: Direct emissions are here defined as emissions at point of use from the consumption of energy.

Consumer empowerment: Interventions facilitating and enabling consumers to achieve desired outcomes, including through market and policy design, information sharing and guidance to inform decision-making.

Consumer protection: “Often established by law, consumer protection is the practise of safeguarding consumers of goods and services from unsafe or unfair practises in the market including throughout the life cycle of the product or service from design and development through to use and disposal.” Other approaches to consumer protection include voluntary standards, industry self-regulation and through product/service design.

Energy Communities: Energy communities or energy cooperatives are citizen driven local energy networks that can produce, consume, store and sell renewable energy amongst their members and shareholders. They generally function for the benefit to the community for both environmental and social reasons above profit making. They can be conducted by an association, a cooperative, a partnership, a non- profit organisation or a small/medium-sized enterprise.

Energy poverty: “Energy poverty occurs when energy bills represent a high percentage of consumers’ income, affecting their capacity to cover essential energy needs and other expenses. It is influenced by household income, the energy efficiency of the home and the price of energy. In England the Low-Income-Low-Energy-Efficiency definition is used whereas in the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland variations of the 10% definition are used.”

Energy services: Energy services can be defined as the benefits that energy carriers produce for human well-being, or those functions performed using energy which facilitate an end service or state including (but not limited to) energy for cooking, lighting, refrigeration and space heating and cooling.

Energy sufficiency: Energy sufficiency refers to a state in which people’s basic needs for energy services are met equitably and by respecting ecological limits. Where this is not achieved there is an inability to sustainably and affordably meet basic needs leading to a state of energy poverty.

Micro-grid: “Microgrids are electricity distribution systems containing loads and distributed energy resources (DERs) (such as distributed generators, storage devices, or controllable loads) that can be operated in a controlled, coordinated way either while connected to the main power network or while islanded” (CIGRE WG C6.21).]

Prosumption: Broadly, “prosumption” refers to the combined practice of producing and consuming energy. Definitions of prosumption vary, and frequently overlap with or replace or are replaced by definitions of self-consumption. Here, we define prosumption as electricity consumers, that produce electricity to cover part of their electricity needs from their own power plant, and use the distribution network to export excess production and to withdraw electricity when self-production is not sufficient to meet own needs.

Solar lease model: A third-party solar financing model, where a customer signs a contract with an installer/developer and pays for the use of a solar system over a specified period of time, rather than paying for the power generated.