

Session 1: **Consumer protection policies for sustainability**

Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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With particular reference to:

UNCTAD: *Achieving the SDGs through Consumer Protection* (CP) 2017

UN: *UN Guidelines for CP* 2015 (UNGCP);

SDG reports & targets, including 2023 UN special edition (midpoint)

Achieving SDGs 1-3 through Consumer Protection,

1

No poverty

UNGCP: '*Legitimate needs*' para 5): a) '*Access by consumers to essential goods & services*'. b): '*Protection of vulnerable & disadvantaged consumers*'.

SDG target 1.3 : '*social protection for all*' emphasis on '*poor & vulnerable*'.

2

Zero hunger

UNGCP: para 70: '*Food security & international food standards*'.

UNCTAD 2017: Agricultural dumping, overuse of antibiotics, obesity.

SDG Indicator 2.2.2: '*overweight*' as form of '*malnutrition*'.

3

Good health & well-being

UNGCP para 5c): '*protection of consumers from hazards to health & safety*'

Sections 5.B & D: '*Physical safety*' & '*Standards for safety*' , (para 53) '*national & international environmental health & safety standards*'.

SDG target 3.8: '*universal health coverage*' & '*essential medicines and vaccines for all*'.

Achieving the SDGs 4-6 through consumer protection

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quality education

UNGCP: para 5, '*legitimate need*' f): '*consumer education including on the environmental social & economic consequences of consumer choice*'.

5

gender equality

UNCTAD: Role of women as 'primary shoppers'. SDG target: 5.4 '*recognize & value unpaid care & domestic work.*' 5b): '*enhance ...enabling technology*'

6

Clean water & sanitation

UNGCP: para: 72: '*improve supply, distribution and quality ...importance of community participation*' para 77: '*member states should promote universal access to public utilities*'

SDG targets for 2030: 6.1: '*achieve universal & equitable access to: safe and affordable drinking water for all*'; 6.2: '*adequate & equitable sanitation & hygiene*'

Achieving the SDGs 7-9 through consumer protection

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affordable & clean energy

UNGCP: paras 76-77: *'universal access to clean energy ..affordable...regulatory oversight'.
'dispute resolution..., taking account...vulnerable & disadvantaged consumers..'*
SDG Target 7.1: *'universal access to affordable, reliable & modern energy services'*
7.2 & 7.3: speed up progress in renewables & energy efficiency.

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decent work & economic growth

SDG Target 8.3 formalisation of informal employment. 8.4 *'resource efficiency in consumption'*. UN 2020: 2/3 of NAWA workforce informal

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industry, innovation & infrastructure

UNGCP: para 5 *'legitimate needs': j) 'a level of protection for consumers using e-commerce that is not less than that afforded in other forms of commerce'.
k): 'the protection of consumer privacy & the global free flow of information'.*
SDG target 9c): *'strive to provide universal & affordable access to the internet in least developed countries by 2020'*. (See session 4 power point).

Achieving the SDGs 10-12 through consumer protection

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Reduced inequalities

SDG target 10c): *'reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances'*
UNGCP: Section 5.J *Financial services* para 66: *'member states should establish' :*
h): *'a regulatory framework that promotes cost efficiency & transparency for remittances ...as well as remedies if transfers fail'*. Remittances reduced 20% by COVID

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sustainable cities & communities

UNGCP: Para 5 *'legitimate need'* a) *'access to essential.. services'*
Para 2: guidelines apply to state owned enterprises (eg utilities).
SDG indicator 11.6.1 *'proportion of municipal solid waste collected & managed in controlled facilities'*.

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responsible consumption & production

See penultimate slide 8;

Achieving the SDGs 13-15 through consumer protection

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climate action

SDG target: 13.1 '**resilience**' against '**climate related hazards & natural disasters**'
SDG 13.2 '**climate change measures**' & '**national strategies**'.

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Life below water

SDG Target 14.4 & indicator 14.4.1 : Biological sustainability

Target 14.6 '**prohibit certain...subsidies which contribute to .. over-fishing**'

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Life on land

UNGCP: The above SDGs are implicitly and repeatedly endorsed by the UNGCP where they refer to the promotion of sustainable consumption. The SDGs as a whole are endorsed in the preamble to the UNGCP as adopted by the General Assembly 22/12/15

Achieving the SDGs 16 & 17 through consumer protection

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Peace, justice & strong institutions

UNGCP: para 5 'legitimate needs': g) *'availability of effective consumer dispute resolution & redress'*; h) *'freedom to form consumer ..groups or organisations & the opportunity ..to present their views in decision making processes..'*

Section 5 F *'Dispute Resolution & Redress'*

Para 37: *'administrative, judicial & alternative dispute resolution...formal or informal...take particular account of vulnerable & disadvantaged consumers'*.

Para 40: *'collective resolution procedures..including those pertaining to overindebtedness & bankruptcy cases'*.

SDG target 16.3: *'equal access to justice for all'*. Indicator 16.3.3: *'formal or informal dispute resolution'*. SDG target 16.9: *'legal identity for all'* see session 4 power point.

partnerships for the goals

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UNGCP: Sections 6 *International cooperation*; 7: *International institutional machinery*: SDG target 17.18 data, monitoring & accountability

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption (SC) & production patterns (responsible consumption)

UNGCP: para 1 '**Objectives**' : h) '**to promote sustainable consumption**';

5 '**legitimate need**': i) '**promotion of sustainable consumption patterns**'

Section 5 H: '**promotion of sustainable consumption**':

para 50: Multi-party responsibility: government, business, consumers, labour, environmentalists;

emphasis on education: SDG Indicator: 12.8.1 '**mainstreaming**' of SC in education.

paras 51 & 58: Regulation, SDG target 12.c: reducing harmful subsidies while protecting poor;

para 52: energy efficiency (EE), SDG target: 7.3 double rate of improvement in EE;

life cycle planning and recycling: SDG Indicator: 12.5.1 '**recycling rate**'.

para 53: International environmental standards – not to be used as disguised barriers to trade;

para 54-5: Impartial environmental testing; evaluation of new substances;

para 59: fiscal measures & cost internalization;

para 60: measurement of progress: eg SDG indicators 12.2.1 & 2 on '**material footprint**'; 12.3 food waste index, 12. a.1 renewable energy, 12.b.1: sustainable tourism;

para 62: research on consumer behavior

Are we on track to achieve the SDGs?

- SDG report 2023 (mid-term): Halfway to 2030, the promise (no one left behind) is in peril. ***‘The SDGs are disappearing in the rear view mirror’***. Hit by pandemic, war and climate related disasters. Of around 140 SDG targets for which data is available, half are moderately or severely off track, over 30% have seen no movement or regressed below the 2015 baseline.
- **Positive:** SDG 12 has seen more progress than any other SDG; over one third SDGs on track;
- **Negative:** SDG 12 has also seen one third stagnating or regressing.

North Africa/West Asia region (NAWA):

- Infrastructure (internet (internet & telecoms) & energy access high by global standards.
 - Water and sanitation: recent progress threatened by critical water stress levels.
 - NAWA has highest proportion of refugees in world – specific difficulties but some innovative responses.
 - food waste 2nd highest region in world in 2019 for both total and household waste.
 - NAWA region has highest fossil fuel subsidies as share of GDP of all regions (2021).
- (NB: producer/consumer combined. Some individual countries elsewhere higher than any NAWA country).
- Most NAWA countries had statistical plans in 2022. Only 4 had SDG action plans.



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Thank you!