

# ENGAGING WITH CONSUMERS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION STRATEGIES AND EXPERIENCES FROM THE SWITCH-ASIA PROGRAMME

*Scaling-up study 2013*



SWITCH-Asia Network Facility  
is funded by the European Union.



SWITCH-Asia Network Facility is implemented by the Collaborating Centre  
on Sustainable Consumption and Production and Wuppertal Institute for Climate,  
Environment and Energy.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ADB</b>	Asian Development Bank	<b>MOFALI</b>	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light industry of Mongolia
<b>APRSCP</b>	Asia Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production	<b>MONET</b>	Ministry of Nature Environment and Tourism of Mongolia
<b>BIRD</b>	Building interior renovation and decoration	<b>MoU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>BJCA</b>	Beijing Consumer Association	<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organisations
<b>BUCEA</b>	Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture	<b>NKU</b>	Nankai University
<b>CCI</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry	<b>PPC</b>	Public procurement centre
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate social responsibility	<b>SC</b>	Sustainable consumption
<b>DEFRA</b>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	<b>SCP</b>	Sustainable consumption and production
<b>FTF-I</b>	Fair Trade Forum India	<b>SfC</b>	Shop For Change
<b>GIZ</b>	German International Cooperation Agency	<b>SPI</b>	Sustainable production innovation
<b>GSI</b>	Green Supply Index	<b>SWaCH</b>	Solid waste collection and handling
<b>IRFT</b>	International Resources for Fairer Trade	<b>TJCA</b>	Tianjin Consumer Association
<b>JDP</b>	Jute diversified products	<b>VCA</b>	General of Vietnam Competition Authority
<b>JIPPTL</b>	Jaipur Integrated Texcraft Park Private Ltd	<b>WEEE</b>	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
<b>LOHAS</b>	Lifestyles of health and sustainability		
<b>MASM</b>	Mongolian Agency for Standardisation and Metrology		
<b>MIDAS</b>	Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services		
<b>MNCCI</b>	Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry		
<b>MoCA</b>	Ministry of Consumer Affairs		
<b>MoEF</b>	Ministry of Environment and Forests		

## LIST OF SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS

(that started in 2009, 2010 and 2012)

	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Project Abbreviation</b>	<b>Location</b>
	Adopt CSR (Helping Vietnamese SMEs Adapt and Adopt Corporate Social Responsibility for Improved Linkages with Global Supply Chains in Sustainable Production)	CSR Vietnam	Vietnam
	China Higher Efficiency Power and Distribution Transformers Promotion Project	Higher Efficient Transformers	China
	Encouraging and Implementing Sustainable Production and Consumption of Eco-friendly Batik in Indonesia and Malaysia)	Clean Batik Initiative	Malaysia and Indonesia
	Electric Motor Systems Energy-Saving Challenge – Improving the Operating Efficiency of Chinese Electric Motor Systems	China Motor Challenge	China
	Establishing E-Waste Channels to Enhance Environment Friendly Recycling	WEEE Recycle	India (Bangalore, Delhi, Kolkata, Pune)
	Establishment of the ASEAN Energy Manager Accreditation Scheme	AEMAS	Multi-Country
	Get Green Vietnam (Sustainable Living and Working in Vietnam)	Get Green	Vietnam
	Greening Supply Chains in the Thai Auto and Automotive Parts Industries	Automotive SSCM	Thailand
	Greening Sri Lankan Hotels	Greening Sri Lankan Hotels	Sri Lanka
	Green Products and Labelling (Green Products Development and Labelling in Mongolia)	Green products	Mongolia
	Green Philippines Island of Sustainability	GPloS	Phillippines

Project Title	Project Abbreviation	Location	
	Improving Environmental and Safety Performance in Electrical and Electronics Industry in China	ESEEC	China
	Implementing Sustainable Consumption in Civil Society of Urban China	SC in Urban China	China
	Improving resource efficiency for the production and recycling of electronic products by adoption of waste tracking system	REWIND	China
	Implementing Industrial Symbiosis and Environmental Management Systems in Tianjin Binhai New Area	Industrial Symbiosis	China
	Improving energy-efficiency and environmental performance of Chinese SMEs and large companies facilitated by voluntary public-private partnerships	VA 3	China
	Jute: An Eco-friendly Alternative For a Sustainable Future	Eco-Jute	Bangladesh, West Bengal in India
	Lead Elimination Project	Lead Elimination Project	Multi country
	Low Energy Housing in Sichuan and Shenzhen, China – Enable and enforce energy efficient building construction,	Low Energy Housing	China
	Mainstreaming Energy Efficiency Through Business Innovation Support	MEET-BIS	Vietnam
	Premium Environmental Management for Companies in China	EMAS Global China	China
	Promoting Fair Trade and Sustainable Consumption in India – PRO SUSTAIN	Pro-Sustain	India
	Scaling Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Soybean Processing Industry (SCOPE)	Soybean Processing (SCOPE)	Indonesia

	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Project Abbreviation</b>	<b>Location</b>
	Scaling Up Sustainable Development of MSME Clusters in India	MSME Clusters	India
	SMEs for environmental Accountability, Responsibility and Transparency	SMART Cebu	Phillippines
	Supporting a greener and more energy efficient construction industry in Mongolia	Greener Construction Project	Mongolia
	Sustainable and Efficient Industrial Development	SEID	Bhutan and Nepal
	Sustainable Building Interior Renovation and Decoration Initiative in China	SUS Bird	China
	Sustainable cotton production in Pakistan's cotton ginning SMEs (SPRING)	Cotton Production (SPRING)	Pakistan
	Sustainable Production (SP) of the Biomass Industries in Malaysia: Optimising Economic Potential and Moving Towards Higher Value Chain	Biomass SP	Malaysia
	Establishing a Sustainable Production System for Rattan Products in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam	Sustainable Rattan	Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam
	Reduction of environmental threats and increase of exportability of Bangladeshi leather products	RE-Tie	Bangladesh
	Sustainable and cleaner production in the manufacturing industries of Pakistan	SCI-Pak	Pakistan
	Sustainable and Responsible Trade Promoted to Wood Processing SMEs through Forest and Trade Networks in China, India and Vietnam)	Wood Processing and Trade	China, India, Vietnam
	Sustainable Public Procurement in Urban Administrations in China	SUPP-Urb China	China (Tianjin, Qinhuangdao and Lanzhou)

	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Project Abbreviation</b>	<b>Location</b>
	Sustainable production through market penetration of closed loop technologies in the metal finishing industry	ACIDLOOP	India
	Sustainable Production in the Food & Beverages Industry in Sri Lanka	Food & Beverages	Sri Lanka
	Sustainable Product Innovation in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos	SPIN-VCL	Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam
	Sustainable Revival of Livelihoods in Post-disaster Sichuan: Enhancing Eco-friendly Pro-poor Bamboo Production Supply Chains to Support The Reconstruction Effort	Bamboo	China (Sichuan)
	Sustainable Textiles for Sustainable Development	SusTex	India (Jaipur)
	Sustainable Tourism in Bhutan: An Integrated Approach to Production, Consumption and Livelihood Development)	Tourism in Bhutan	Bhutan
	Train the trainers: a proposal to train chinese construction sector SME's in energy saving Techniques and technologies	Train the trainers	China
	VSBK – Vertical Shaft Brick Kilns and other SCP – Sustainable Construction Practices	VSBK	Nepal
	Waste to Energy for the Rice Milling Sector in Cambodia	WtE in Rice Milling Sector	Cambodia
	Zero Carbon Resorts – Building Energy Autonomous Resorts Creating Appropriate Technology Solutions	ZCR	Philippines



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# FOREWORD



**T**he world has come to a point in development where behaviour has to be more environmentally friendly and more 'sustainable'. Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) has emerged in recent years, and is still taking shape, as an approach that both public and private sectors can follow, to improve resource use and efficiency and, for business, to generate alternative market opportunities at the same time.

The European Union (EU) has invested heavily with its development funds in SCP in Asia, with 70 projects alone co-funded under the SWITCH-Asia programme. These projects, along with other initiatives in the region, are generating SCP tools and practices for use by industry, policy-makers, and consumer groups recognising the importance of going green.

The problem now is that such innovations are not spreading fast enough. SCP is not being replicated sufficiently to create sustainable industries and it is not creating the impact we need. It is the same with policy. There are now SCP instruments in Asia that can help to provide an enabling environment for business and consumers alike to SWITCH to green thinking and more sustainable behaviour. But they are often not being fully implemented, or enforced effectively, and their impact remains scattered.

SCP has not yet become an everyday practice. Anticipating this challenge of limited 'uptake', SWITCH-Asia was designed from the start with a Network Facility to analyse the grant-funded projects, to distill lessons and, significantly, to share them broadly. In this way, the EU is seeking maximum impact for its SCP programme in Asia, and for SCP at large.

Looking at what is preventing the spread of SCP practices the Network Facility found 'barriers' include lack of adequate financial resources and technical knowledge, lack of awareness, inefficient flow of information, inadequate policy frameworks and peer pressure that favours un-

sustainable practices. In their project designs many projects include 'leverage' points where a relatively small effort can create a significant jump in the replication of SCP. Finally, the projects have been developing strategies that face the barriers, open up possibilities to overcome them, and enable specific sectors of society (namely, business and public services) to start using or intensify the use of SCP practices.

Such scaling-up tends to be either horizontal or vertical. For horizontal scaling-up, projects roll out their practices within a sector or a geographic area, for example, cleaner production in Bangladesh tanneries. For this, they partner with business membership organisations to make a business case out of SCP and build capacity for implementation amongst interested SMEs. For vertical scaling-up, projects engage with local, national or even regional policy-makers to influence legislation and other 'rules' governing the behaviour of SMEs and consumers. A introductory report 'Framing of scaling-up SCP practices in the SWITCH-Asia Programme' summarises the findings and places them in the context of other scaling-up efforts.

The Network Facility identified five clusters of leveraging strategies based on the analysis of the project data and carried out continuous in-depth study on each: engaging with service providers, building partnerships within supply chains, linking with policy makers, engaging with consumers towards ethical purchasing and usage of goods, and enabling access to finance.

The resulting reports, providing real-world experiences from the SWITCH-Asia projects, the barriers they faced and the strategies they employed, are now available on the SWITCH-Asia website [www.switch-asia.eu](http://www.switch-asia.eu).

The Network Facility hopes SCP practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers will be able to use the reports in a shared effort of pushing SCP in Asia for a more sustainable world.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



From the perspective of the SWITCH-Asia programme, consumers can make a significant contribution towards the creation of a sustainable society if they are encouraged and enabled to care more about natural resources when making decisions during purchase, use and disposal of a product or a service. At the same time, multi-stakeholder efforts among governments, NGOs and businesses are needed to overcome obstacles for behaviour shift such as unclear, doubtful, or the complete lack of information or the unavailability of green and fair choices. This study investigates how SWITCH-Asia projects are working to overcome these obstacles for achieving a switch to sustainable consumption patterns among consumers.

In response to a survey done among 44 SWITCH-Asia projects in 2013, slightly more than half of them indicated their engagement with either private consumers (i.e. households and individual consumers) and/or public purchasers (i.e. governmental bodies and institutional consumers). On the one hand, among households, middle-class is as a priority segment for SWITCH-Asia projects as their purchasing power is growing fast and they are rapidly emulating the wasteful and unsustainable consumption patterns of more industrialized countries. On the other hand, a wide range of public procurers

from state owned enterprises, national procurement centres to local authorities are addressed by the projects.

Irrespective of the type of consumer groups targeted, the number one barrier mentioned by the SWITCH-Asia projects is the lack of information about green and fair products, and the capacity of (public and private) buyers to interpret that information. Low consumer awareness on standards and labels was repeatedly mentioned in market surveys done by projects. Public procurers were found to lack awareness and knowledge of the meaning of 'green procurement', 'green product standards' and 'life-cycle assessment'.

Price is another big barrier in the creation of markets for environment friendly products. High price was commonly mentioned as a market challenge by the consumers interviewed by the projects.

The weak communication of product information to consumers is also an obvious barrier addressed by the projects. Especially, for corporate purchasers, there are usually no tools to help them understand why resource-efficiency is pushing prices up. Without information being made available on product quality and pricing, end-users are confused.

Projects mention the importance of improving accessibility and availability to achieve faster growth in the market for green products. Not only at the point of purchase but also at the end-of-life stage accessibility to collection centres for recycling centres is a crucial matter.

It is also found that the traditional image of natural materials such as jute can be an obstacle to achieve a switch in purchasing patterns. The positioning has been low price-low quality leading to wrong perception by consumers.

In some countries, projects mention a different type of image problem that is being imported products perceived to be better than local alternatives. This is a huge barrier for projects aiming to enhance sales of local produce.



Project	 'Pull' strategies & tools	 'Push' strategies & tools
<b>Target ...</b>	Consumers groups	Producers, suppliers and retailers
<b>Aim at ...</b>	Tackling barriers that might have locked the consumer power and could again set that power free to create demand for ethical products	Convincing and enabling producers and retailers to put 'sustainable products and services' in the market
<b>Involve cooperation with ...</b>	NGOs Consumer associations Advertising agencies Retailers Suppliers and producers	Governments Marketing agencies Designers
<b>Include ...</b>	Tools for raising awareness Tools for visibility and transparency Tools for accessibility Experiential tools Procurement support tools Community based tools	Improving marketing skills Making market links Stimulating green product development Catalyzing product innovation Facilitating infrastructure development Choice editing Co-creation

This study identified a range of strategies and tools that SWITCH-Asia projects use to remove these “barriers” for a shift to sustainable consumption practices. These can be categorised to have more of a ‘pull’ (through market demand) and encourage consumers to purchase or use more sustainable products. Or, they can give more of a ‘push’ (through supply), helping to provide a more visible supply of goods and services that are more environmentally friendly or socially conscious.



The **pull strategies** that can leverage demand and are aiming at enhancing awareness, accessibility, visibility and product experience are as follows:

**Tools for raising awareness:** Awareness-raising tools focus on informing the consumer about what green and fair products could mean, why these products might be more expensive, and how consumers could make a difference. Projects used mainly public campaigns to raise awareness on product sustainability standards such as fair trade. Sensitisation seems to be the most popular ‘pull’ strategy among projects.

**Tools for visibility and transparency:** Visibility tools help consumers to differentiate ‘at a glance’ between ethical products and services and those in mainstream markets. For differentiation, projects created umbrella labels and collective brands. For transparency, projects put in place green certification schemes and green product standards. Improved design is found to be instrumental in getting products to be eye-catchers.

**Tools for accessibility:** Accessibility tools help to improve distribution channels for green products. Projects indicate at the importance of engaging with established brands and retailers for effective distribution. Another approach would be to establish networks of specialized shops, if promotion of specific concepts such as Fair Trade is at stake.

**Experiential tools:** Seeing and experiencing how sustainable production differs from conventional practices could be very convincing for the corporate buyers to change behaviour. Via study tours, projects facilitate a shift in awareness and purchasing practices as international traders and retailers discover about important environmental aspects of production processes.

**Procurement support tools:** Clear guidance on procurement criteria and procedures can empower bulk buyers and encourage them to exercise their muscle in the market. Aiming to tackle the knowledge gap and support decision-making process of public procurers, projects develop technical procurement guidelines, establish procurement platforms and promote total cost accounting tools.

**Community based tools:** Several projects enable creation of communities of practice for addressing social processes and habitual actions that might be preventing a switch to sustainable consumption. A multiplier effect is tried to be built by training change agents, who can act as multipliers of environmentally friendly practices within social groups.

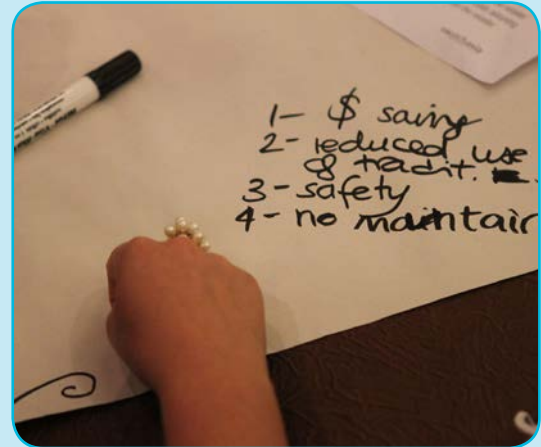


The **push strategies** that can leverage supply are as follows:

**Improving marketing skills:** The projects aim at improving the target SMEs' knowledge of current and potential markets and customer requirements. They conduct marketing courses and show case successful marketing campaigns. Making market links: Once market needs are clear and products are developed accordingly, the next step for SWITCH-Asia projects targeting European buyers is in finding a match for the producer SMEs. Trade fairs are the most commonly used tool for this.

**Stimulating green product development:** Projects run advanced competitions and award schemes for stimulating SMEs to come up with green product ideas. In addition, eco-design guidelines are used to guide and encourage the use of minimum green product standards.

**Catalysing product innovation:** Having a creative and inspiring environment could be key for pushing green products in to the market. Projects set up networks of local experts and organizations that could provide SMEs with advice and technical expertise to further innovate their product portfolio. Business facilitation units can also act as learning hubs and forums for green product innovation.



**Facilitating infrastructure development:** Many SWITCH-Asia projects support the development of infrastructure to improve distribution, use and collection systems for green products. Infrastructure support could include anything from setting up an operating system to locating physical facilities.

**Choice editing:** Removing products with harmful components and ingredients such as eliminating lead paints is the focus of a few SWITCH-Asia projects.

**Co-creation:** The innovative approach of co-design of products and services by both producers and consumers is applied by a SWITCH-Asia project as well.

SWITCH-Asia experience has shown that the projects need to achieve a balanced mix of 'push' and 'pull' tools for making a successful impact. In addition, getting an in depth understanding of the characteristics and needs of the target consumer segments is equivalently important. The projects emphasized that the delivery of consistent and clear messages to the target consumers was essential for effective awareness-raising campaigns and product accessibility. In messaging, health promotion seems to be an effective entry point and a strong incentive for consumers



bamboo to grow weaker, and western inventions to be considered 'modern'. The perception of what is modern needs to be challenged. Secondly, the projects can also work with low-income consumers, a market segment often referred to as the 'bottom of the economic pyramid'. Creating and replicating innovative solutions that are both sustainable and affordable for low-income consumers remains another largely untapped sustainable consumption opportunity. Thirdly, a big leverage area for achieving resource-efficient consumption is to move beyond creating demand for green products and to promote values that are less materialistic and favour conspicuous consumption less. This thinking would lead to project interventions at a preventive level and go beyond incremental modifications of the production processes and the products that are consumed.

to pay more attention to, and accept the cost of, sustainable products. Another learning was that development of the standards alone is not sufficient to shift purchasing behaviour. For disseminating the standards, awareness raising-activities and supporting tools such as eco-design guidelines, and facilitation of supplier match-making with retailers would be necessary. High price is commonly mentioned as a barrier for shifting to green products. The projects that worked on visuals and total cost calculations tools experienced that they could effectively encourage buyers to think beyond the purchasing price and be made aware of further costs that could be incurred during the use of the product. Ensuring clear support from the national and/or local governmental agencies for 'push' and 'pull' strategies seems to be crucial. This is particularly important for long-term sustainability of 'push' strategies if such bodies have an implementing role.

There remain many leverage points suggested at the networking events and stakeholder workshops that SWITCH-Asia Programme can explore for scaling-up sustainable consumption in Asia. Firstly, Asian culture for, for example, saving, using natural materials in everyday life, can be effectively tapped into. Unfortunately, the trend has been for the link to natural materials like





# 1 INTRODUCTION



**A**cross the world, as in Asia, development has become synonymous with increasing consumption. What if members of the bulging middle class in the Asia region continues to aspire to move along the same path of consumption as their counterparts in industrialised nations? And what if government and corporations embark on resource-intensive production to address the increasing unmet needs of low-income consumers? It will take three more planets to cater to this scale of consumption<sup>1</sup>. The hard truth is that we only have one planet and the only feasible way it can continue to support us is to create less resource-intensive, and more sustainable, patterns of consumption and production.

Given this scenario, the grant-funding SWITCH-Asia programme aims to promote sustainable production (less polluting and more resource-efficient products, processes, and services) and sustainable consumption (more environmentally friendly and socially just purchasing, use and disposal of products, processes and services) in Asia. Its co-funded projects therefore are expected to reach out towards a large number of consumer groups in addition to the main target group of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Indeed, many SWITCH-Asia projects have repeatedly stated that no matter how far production is 'greened', if there is no buyer and no demand for green and fair products, a 'switch' to sustainable patterns will not be possible. So both opportunities need to be addressed, simultaneously. Consumption and production are two sides of the same coin.

This thematic study investigates strategies used by SWITCH-Asia projects, which promote a 'switch' in the behaviour of individual and public consumers. It shows how sustainable consumption is framed by the projects to date, and how they are approaching and engaging with consumers. It provides an overview of the strategies and tools that the projects are putting into place in collaboration with leveraging partners.

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To provide a picture of what is being done towards sustainable consumption within the SWITCH-Asia programme;
- To list the opportunities for sustainable consumption identified by the SWITCH-Asia projects;
- To list the barriers for sustainable consumption that the SWITCH-Asia projects chose to address; and,
- To compile and categorise the mechanisms that the SWITCH-Asia projects are using to encourage a shift in the behaviour of private and public consumers.

This first edition of this study was published in 2012. The project information was collected via desk research and field interviews conducted in 2011. This second and revised edition includes newly harvested information from the SWITCH-Asia projects that started to operate in 2012. In addition, this edition integrates information from the survey on engagement of projects with consumers groups conducted at the end of 2012. The background to the report provides an overview of the consumption challenges in the region, describes the framework for factors influ-



*Developing countries in Asia will account for 43% of worldwide consumption by 2030<sup>2</sup>. Without addressing consumption issues, the sustainable production of products and services cannot be mainstreamed.*

1) According to the WWF Living Planet Report, for example see 2012 edition at this link: [http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/lpr\\_2012\\_summary\\_booklet\\_final.pdf](http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/lpr_2012_summary_booklet_final.pdf)

2) ADB (2010). The Future of Growth in Asia: Asian Development Bank Outlook Update 2010. Asian Development Bank.

encing behavioural change and strategies to be included in a behaviour change toolbox. Chapter 3 starts by elaborating the characteristics of consumer groups addressed by the SWITCH-Asia projects and details the consumption challenges and barriers identified by them. Chapter 4 gives a detailed account of the pull and push strategies and tools that the SWITCH-Asia projects utilise



## ENGAGING WITH CONSUMERS – THE SURVEY

*From November 2012 to January 2013, 44 projects were asked in a survey how they engage with consumer groups. Projects indicated whether they target individual and/or public consumers. They gave their opinion on the important motivators and barriers behind changing behaviour. They were also asked to report on the type of approaches, tools and instruments they are applying in response. Finally, they were requested to state their three most important success factors for achieving consumer behaviour change. All statistical data in this study refer to this survey.*

when tackling those barriers. Chapter 5 shares with the reader the lessons learned by the projects for designing and implementing effective strategies towards sustainable consumption.

## 2 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 CONSUMPTION CHALLENGES

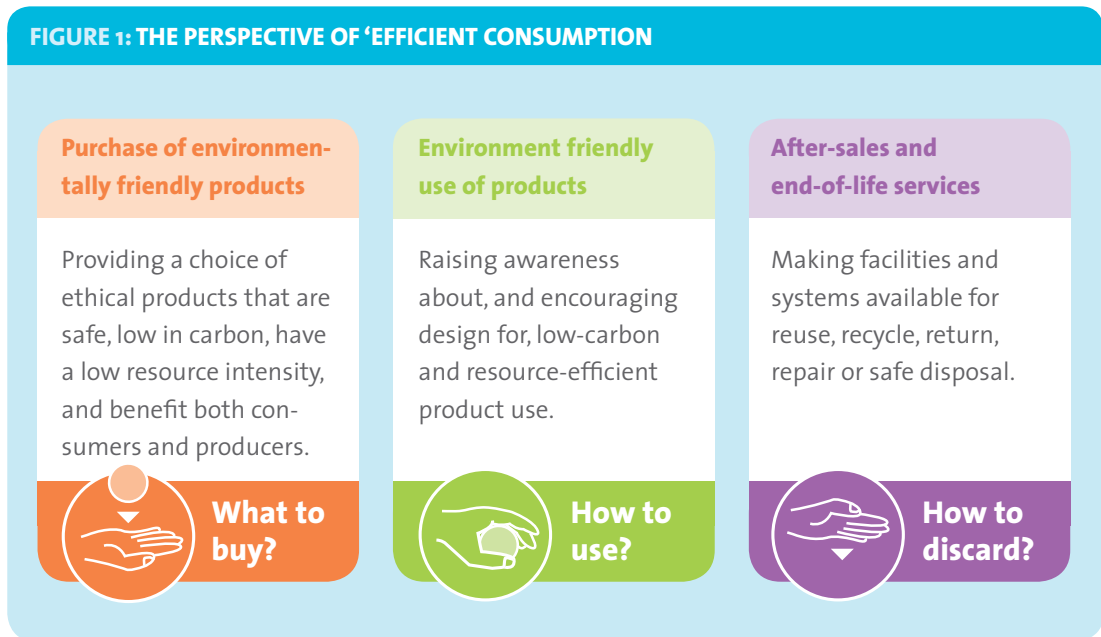
#### **Efficient consumption challenge**

From the perspective of the SWITCH-Asia programme, households or ‘individual consumers’ can make a significant contribution towards the creation of a sustainable society if they are encouraged and enabled to care more about natural resources when making decisions during purchase, use and disposal of a product or a service.

SWITCH-Asia project partners often mention that the conscious choices consumers make can be a driver for greater sustainable production. For example, according to the *Green Products* project, which aims at green product development and eco-labelling for locally produced products in Mongolia, higher production and sales of sustainable Mongolian products depend to a great extent on demand. Manufacturing SMEs are working on green product standards, but green products and labels also need to be promoted amongst retailers and consumers.



FIGURE 1: THE PERSPECTIVE OF 'EFFICIENT CONSUMPTION'



Consumers that are more conscious about sustainability issues can pressure producers into adopting more ecologically friendly practices. They can pressure companies to change suppliers or make improvements, and can harm sales of environmentally unfriendly products or create market opportunities for 'better' products. For example, the awareness-raising activities and campaigns on fair trade standards by the *Pro-Sustain* project mobilise the market power of middle-class consumers to question 'conventional' manufacturing processes. This project is creating a consumer market for fair trade products in India to help increase the use of environmentally sustainable production and consumption practices. In this way it can also reduce poverty amongst poor farmers and handicraft producers.

In fact, this argument is valid both for both manufacturing and service companies. For example, in the *Greening Sri Lankan Hotels* project, which seeks to address the issue of high energy, water and resource consumption of the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka, tour operators are considered the main stakeholders as they can persuade tourists to patronise hotels practicing sustainable consumption and production (SCP).

In this way, sustainable consumption practices can contribute to the improvement of life-cycle performance of products and services. This kind of consumption is about overcoming 'inefficient consumption', where the needs and wants can be met with a lower use of resources and environmental impact (see Figure 1).

**Factors for behaviour shift**

Still, how much awareness, information, encouragement and infrastructure is there for consumers to take the right decisions? Not much, as evidenced by various consumers approached in a video<sup>3</sup> produced by the SWITCH-Asia *Pro-Sustain* and *SPIN-VCL* projects, together with the Consumers International, Ogilvy Earth and the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility (See Figure 2). The partners collected sound bites and interviews in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and China. Main barriers mentioned were the need for more information, the lack of green choices, a low trust in claims, the lack of role models, and weak infrastructure available to support sustainable behaviour.

FIGURE 2: SWITCH-ASIA VIDEO ON HOW TO ENGAGE ASIAN CONSUMERS FOR SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION

([youtu.be/5efdxztwPgE](https://youtu.be/5efdxztwPgE))



3) <http://www.switch-asia.eu/de/switch-learn/sustainable-consumption-in-asia.html>

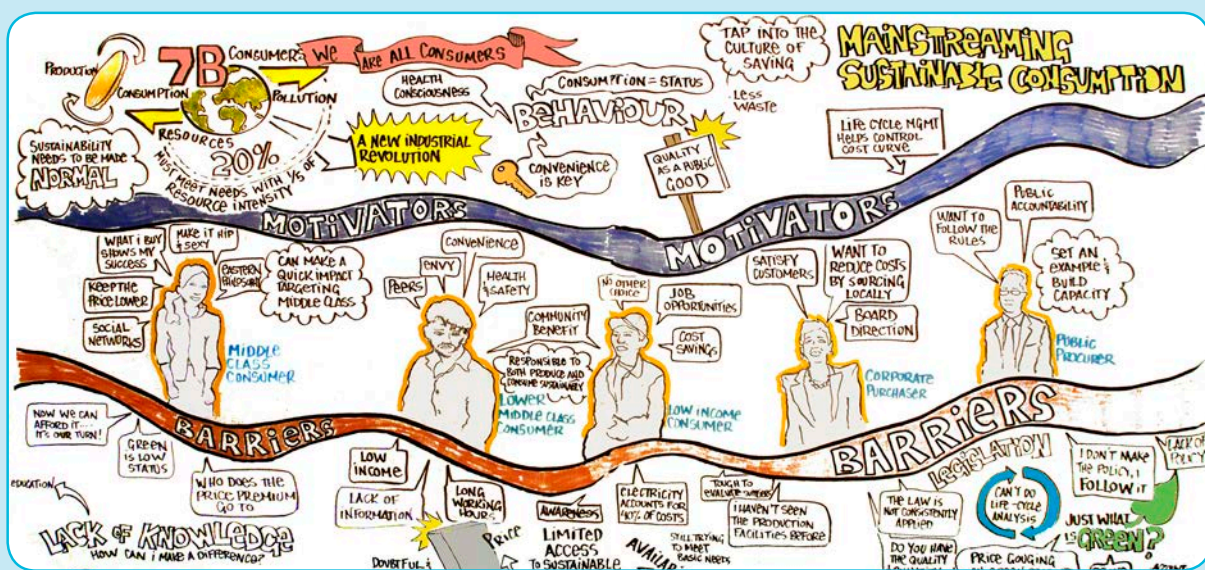
In earlier discussions facilitated by the Network Facility, similar reactions were collated. A workshop at the Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (APRSCP) in Yogyakarta (November, 2011) gathered insights into the decision-making behaviour of urban middle-class consumers, low-income people, public procurers and corporate purchasers. Important factors motivating and preventing middle-class consumers from purchasing and consuming sustainably were synthesised visually<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 3). On the one hand, high price and lack of understanding on environmental aspects of products were mentioned as the main barriers for the middle class. On the other hand, friends and family acting as role models, convenience, health and safety benefits were mentioned as motivators. In a follow-up session, speakers and participants elaborated on the strategies and tactics developed to leverage the motivators and to break through the barriers<sup>5</sup>. A collective opinion among workshop participants was to tap into Eastern philosophy, which encourages less waste and greater savings. For public procurers, it was said that more capacity building would be needed before they could be used to set a good example.

It does not come as a surprise that the findings are also mentioned in studies informing policy-makers, who want to understand the factors for individual pro-environmental behaviour



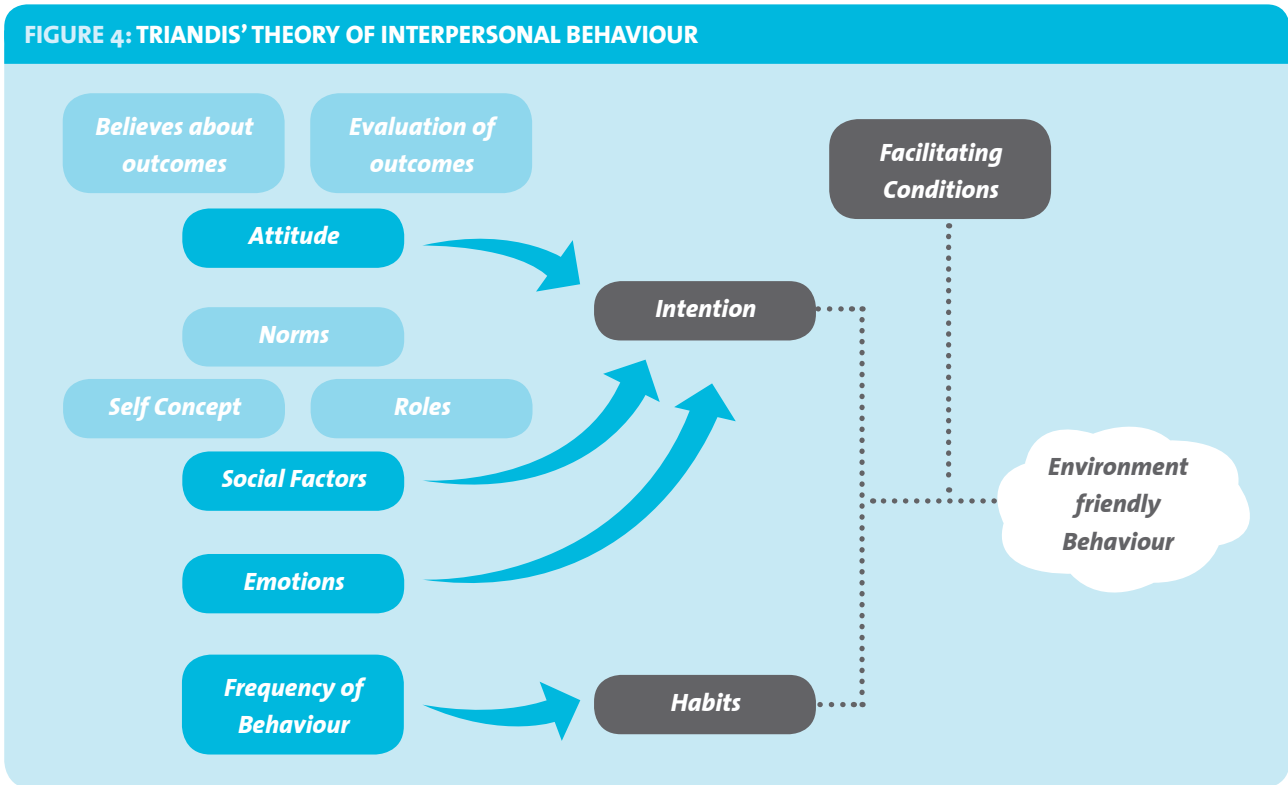
change. For example, the resources used by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in the UK make a reference to a social science model including attitude, social factors, emotions, habits and facilitating conditions<sup>6</sup>. In this model, attitude refers to rational choice based on the educational level of the consumer and the information they hold. Social factors concern the social surroundings of the consumer and tell how family, friends, and peers are influencing them. The habits are about repeated actions, which do not require too much conscious thought. The facilitating conditions refer to the available physical infrastructure like bike lanes, or market conditions like tax breaks for green products. This model is often used as a framework for empirical analysis of strengths and weaknesses of the factors in different kind of situations (see Figure 4).

FIGURE 3: MOTIVATORS AND BARRIERS FOR ETHICAL CONSUMPTION AS DISCUSSED AT THE APRSCP



4) [www.switch-asia.eu/switch-info/events/switch-asia-at-aprscp-2011/mainstreaming-sustainable-consumption-part-1.html](http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-info/events/switch-asia-at-aprscp-2011/mainstreaming-sustainable-consumption-part-1.html)  
 5) [www.switch-asia.eu/switch-info/events/switch-asia-at-aprscp-2011/mainstreaming-sustainable-consumption-part-2.html](http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-info/events/switch-asia-at-aprscp-2011/mainstreaming-sustainable-consumption-part-2.html)  
 6) Darnton, A.; Elster-Jones, J.; Lucas, K.; Brooks, M. (2006). Promoting Pro-environmental Behaviour Existing Evidence to Inform Better Policy Making. A Study for The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Accessed from: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/what/priority/behaviourChangeResearchAndGuidance.htm>

FIGURE 4: TRIANDIS' THEORY OF INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

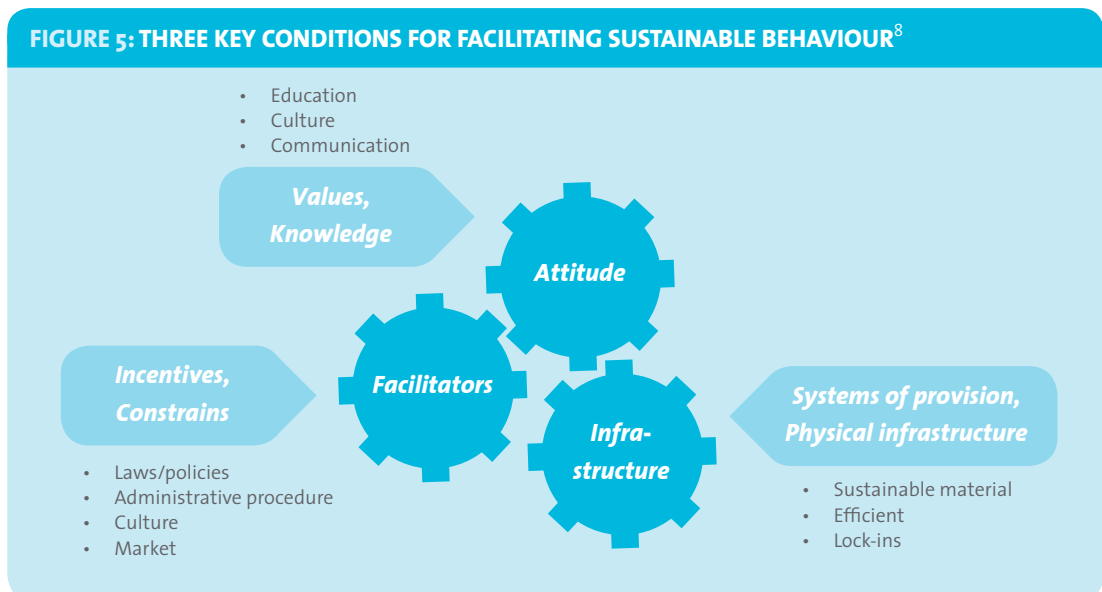


Similarly, SWITCH-Asia training materials for policy-makers<sup>7</sup> underline that policies to encourage sustainable consumer behaviour must consider the social and physical environment surrounding the individual. Three key pre-conditions for encouraging sustainable behaviour are listed as: 1) the right attitude by all stakeholders in the production-consumption system, mainly referring to awareness-raising for shifting attitudes; 2) a facilitating system and social infrastructure to translate those attitudes into concrete action,

mainly referring to legal, administrative cultural, market facilitators; and 3) sustainable infrastructure. These three are sometimes referred to as the mindware, software and hardware of sustainable consumption (see Figure 5).

This thematic study also makes use of these models in the coming chapters for providing an overview of the motivating and hindering factors that SWITCH-Asia projects are tackling to achieve a shift in consumer behaviour.

FIGURE 5: THREE KEY CONDITIONS FOR FACILITATING SUSTAINABLE BEHAVIOUR<sup>8</sup>



7) Akenji et. al. (2012). SCP: A Handbook for Policy Makers. With cases from Asia and the Pacific. First Edition. UNEP. Accessed from: [http://www.switch-asia.eu/fileadmin/content/PSC/Publication/SCP-Manual\\_low-resolution\\_.pdf](http://www.switch-asia.eu/fileadmin/content/PSC/Publication/SCP-Manual_low-resolution_.pdf)

8) Ibid.

### Inclusive consumption challenge

Despite Asia's economic growth over the last two decades, the region remains home to approximately two-thirds of the world's poor<sup>9</sup>. The region is still struggling to provide access to basic needs for the low-income group, who live on the edge of survival.

In that sense, SWITCH-Asia programme recognises that targeting low-income consumers is as important as targeting the global consumer class in Asia. Basic needs such as access to food, safe drinking water, shelter with an affordable source of energy, and safe and efficient transportation, are expected to be met at low cost and often in absence of infrastructure. Often innovative product design making use of local and natural materials as well as indigenous knowledge can be key. This kind of consumption challenge can be entitled as 'inclusive consumption', where the basic needs of low-income communities can be met.

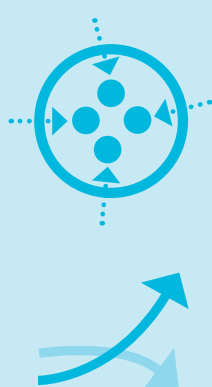
### Green corporate purchasing challenge

One of the principal challenges is as well integration of environmental and social concerns into the purchasing practices of bulk procurers including retailers and producers. Corporate buyers usually sit in a powerful position within the value chain and their buying strategies often shape the sustainability performance of upstream suppliers. Especially in Asia, which has become the global manufacturing hub, a switch to sustainable corporate purchasing or sustainable supply chain management would make a huge impact. The experience of SWITCH-Asia projects in this leverage area is discussed in another scaling up report, namely 'Sustainable Supply Chain Initiatives: Strategies and lessons learned from the SWITCH-Asia Programme'.

### Green Public Procurement challenge

In Asia, public procurement by an administrative government of a country can account for 20-30% of the country's total product and service consumption. A number of countries in the region are leading by example such as Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Thailand, which have already passed green procurement legislation. In smaller countries, the government is the most important consumer, and the public sector is therefore in a position to negotiate a good price and good

**FIGURE 6: SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION REFERS TO BOTH INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT CONSUMPTION IN THE SWITCH-ASIA PROGRAMME**



#### **Inclusive consumption:**

*Provide access to goods and services to people who have so far been denied access, especially to help them satisfy their basic needs, increase their well-being and raise their productivity*

#### **Efficient consumption:**

*Provide opportunities to meet needs and improve quality of life and productivity through consumption of products and services with equal or reduced resource use and environmental impacts.*

quality, and can also push companies to adopt sustainable production methods, life-cycle approaches and sustainability strategies for their entire production cycles. This gives the government an absolute upper hand in encouraging sustainable consumption by exemplifying green purchasing.

The SWITCH-Asia programme also recognises the huge leverage behind governmental purchasing. The importance of leading by example is cannot be underestimated.



9) UNESCAP, ADB and UNDP (2010). Paths to 2015. MDG Priorities in Asia and the Pacific. Asia-Pacific MDG Report 2010/11.



## 2.2 THE BEHAVIOUR SHIFT TOOLBOX

Changing behaviour is difficult. Overcoming problems of consumer lock-in, unfreezing old habits and forming new ones, understanding the complexity of the social logic in which individual behaviours are embedded: all these are pre-requisites for successful behaviour change strategies.

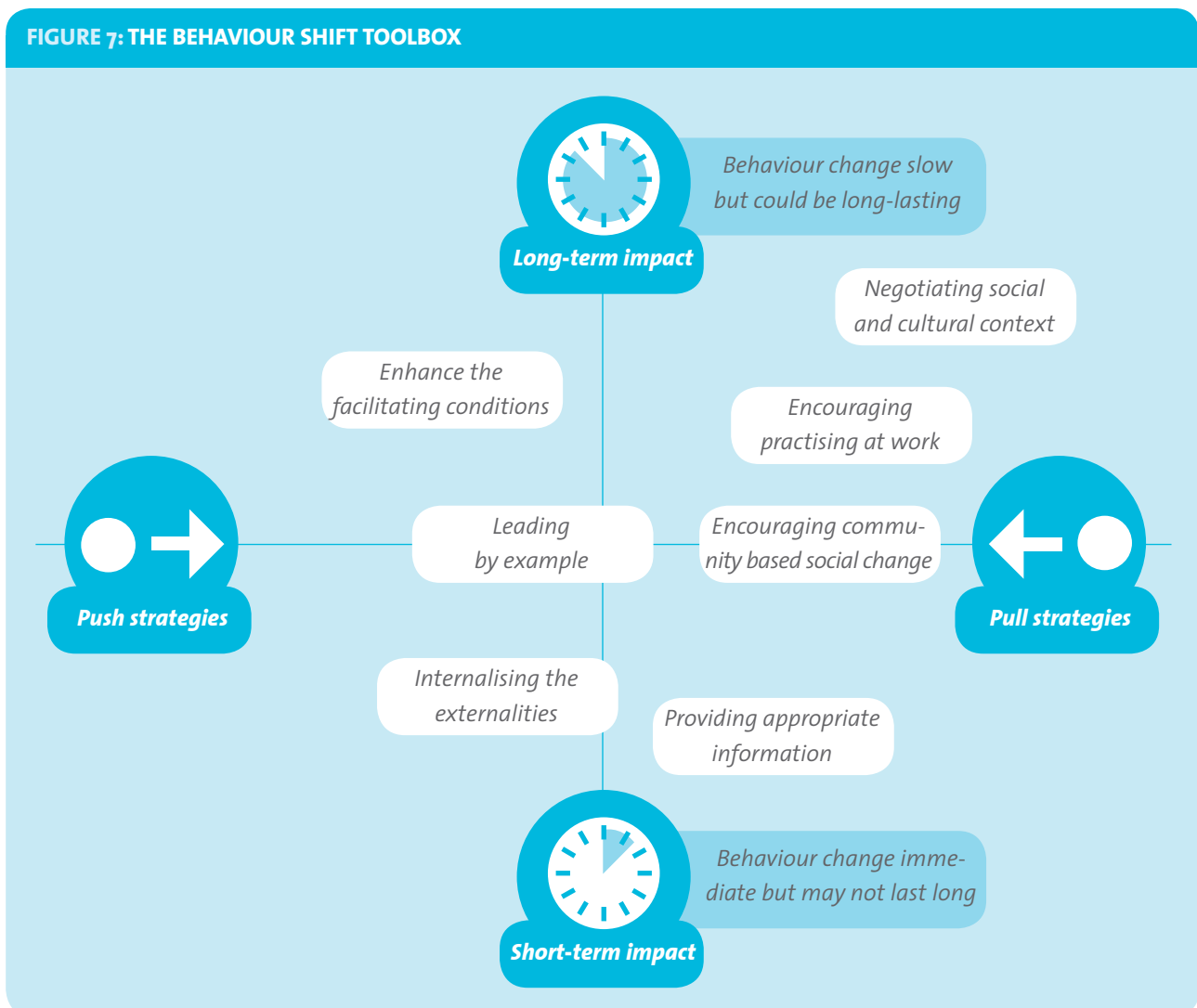
However, knowing that a switch towards SCP cannot be achieved without addressing consumer behaviour, SWITCH-Asia projects bravely enter and try to conquer this complex terrain, which has not yet been much explored in Asia. They try to support behaviour shifts both directly and indirectly in numerous ways.

Based on the factors discussed for behaviour shift in the earlier section, several strategies can

be included in a behaviour shift toolbox. In any case, the strategy should be selected according to the consumer segments targeted. No one strategy fits all situations and locations. The toolbox includes eight main strategy areas:

- Providing appropriate information**  
 Strategies can be implemented to help people understand the urgency of health, safety and environmental issues, and to easily access information on which to base their decisions. For SWITCH-Asia projects, intervening at the level of raising awareness, for example via public awareness campaigns, could be the least costly and easiest to implement.
- Internalising the externalities**  
 Adjusting prices to incorporate negative or positive externalities can be a legitimate

FIGURE 7: THE BEHAVIOUR SHIFT TOOLBOX



avenue through which to promote pro-environmental or pro-social behaviour and to discourage anti-social or environmentally damaging behaviour. It could be rather challenging for SWITCH-Asia projects to intervene at the level of economic instruments as there might be links to fiscal policy.

- **Enhancing the facilitating conditions**

Moving beyond the rational choice model and tapping into the social and institutional context, one of the most effective strategies can be enhancing facilitating conditions. These can include the provision of recycling facilities, access to energy efficient lights and appliances, the availability of public transport services and so on.

- **Negotiating the institutional context**

The institutional context includes the set of rules, regulations and operating context, within which choice is negotiated. Strategies targeting product standards, building standards, trading standards, media and marketing standards could have a significant role in facilitating a shift towards efficient consumption.

- **Negotiating social and cultural context**

Strategies that can possibly influence social norms, ethical codes and cultural expectations could have a direct effect on consumer behaviour.

- **Encouraging practising at work**

There is evidence to suggest that behaving in certain ways in one context can have a knock-on effect in another context. If I am encouraged to recycle at work, it is more



likely that I will attempt to recycle at home. SWITCH-Asia projects could start to see a shift in behaviour within households by addressing family members in their daily roles as employees.

- **Encouraging community based social change**

Social processes can present significant impediments to pro-environmental consumer behaviour. A particular kind of elaborative social process is vital in 'unfreezing' habitual behaviour and renegotiating new social norms. A few SWITCH-Asia projects reckon that changing behaviour can not be conceived as the processes of encouraging change at the individual level, rather pro-environmental behavioural change has to be a social process.

- **Leading by example**

For the government, leading by example is essential. Clear environmental management initiatives and strong sustainable procurement programmes in both the public sector and within public-private partnerships can have a robust influence on sustainable consumption in a variety of ways.



These strategies within a behaviour shift toolbox can be mapped based on the market response created and the robustness of behaviour change achieved (See Figure 7). The X-axis representing the market response indicates a spectrum between a market pull and a market push effect. The Y-axis shows whether the behaviour change happens slow or fast and whether it could be permanent or temporary. A more detailed mapping based on SWITCH-Asia experience is given in Chapter 4.



# 3 DEPARTURE POINTS FOR STRATEGIES

## 3.1 CONSUMER GROUPS TARGETED IN THE SWITCH-ASIA PROGRAMME

A starting point for SWITCH-Asia projects for choosing behaviour change tools is to identify the relevant consumer segments they like to focus on and understand their characteristics. The focus can be either on a particular segment of private consumers (i.e. households and individual consumers) or public purchasers (i.e. governmental bodies and institutional consumers) in a sector and/or a region.

In response to the survey done, out of the 24 projects, 8 of them said that they only aim at household behaviour change, 5 of them said that they only target public procurers and 11 of them said they focus on both consumer groups. Below, we discuss the typical consumer segments SWITCH-Asia projects are targeting and their relevance.



Globally, the size of the middle class could increase from 1.8 billion people to 3.2 billion by 2020 and to 4.9 billion by 2030. Almost all of this growth (85 %) will come from Asia. So by 2030, two-thirds of the global middle class is expected to live in the Asia Pacific region<sup>10</sup>. The largest number is expected to be in China and India (see Figure below). The middle classes usually live in urban areas, are better educated, hold salaried jobs, and have fewer children. These characteristics make them very attractive as a target group for more environmentally and socially sound products. These classes could also help create a 'green leap' to a lifestyle less resource-intensive than that of their peers in Europe and North America.

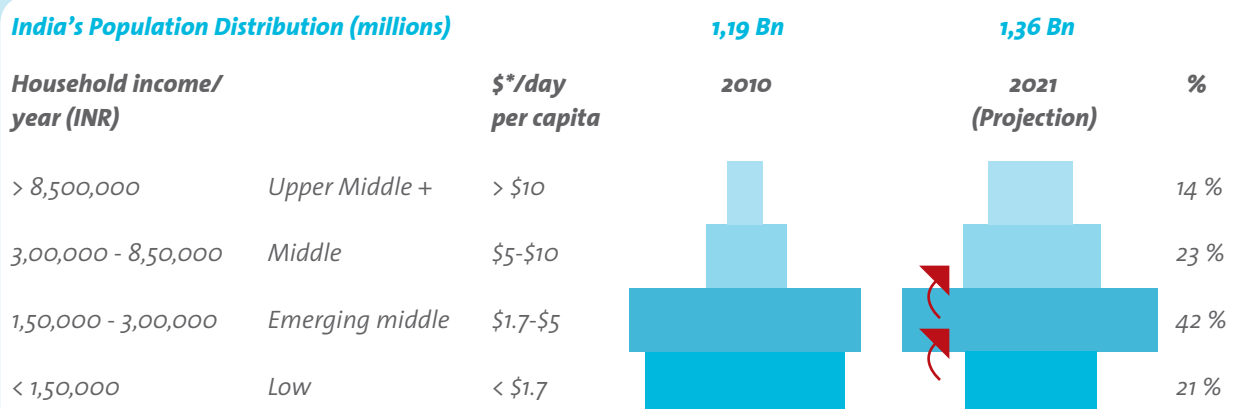
### Middle-class – purchasing power

Accompanying the economic growth in several Asian countries, there has been a new consumer class emerging that largely emulates the wasteful and unsustainable ways of more industrialised countries. Based on the forecast for the increase in the number of middle-class consumers in Asia, several SWITCH-Asia projects chose to focus on this new generation of consumers.

**FIGURE 8: THE MIDDLE AND EMERGING MIDDLE-CLASS IS SET TO EXPAND IN INDIA**

(Source: [www.pwc.com/in/en/publications/global-emerging-middle/the-opportunity.jhtml](http://www.pwc.com/in/en/publications/global-emerging-middle/the-opportunity.jhtml))

*By 2021, India will have about 600 million people constituting the "Emerging Middle Class" segment*



10) Homi Kharas (2010). The Emerging Middle Class in Developing Countries. Research Area: Global Development Outlook. OECD Development Centre. Working Paper No. 285.

The SWITCH-Asia project *Pro-Sustain* has recognised the huge potential of middle class for driving change. According to the project manager, if just 1% of Indian middle-class consumers became fair trade buyers it would mean a market for fair trade equal to a quarter of the population of the Netherlands. Hence, the project aims to create a consumer market for fair trade products in India that helps to build environmentally sustainable production and consumption practices, while reducing poverty amongst poor farmers and handicraft producers. Around 350,000 upper-middle-class consumer households as well as emerging middle-class consumers among college students and youth are targeted.

Similarly, the *Clean Batik Initiative*, a SWITCH-Asia project in Indonesia and Malaysia, and the *Greening Sri Lanka Hotels* project target middle- and upper-class income groups. Their characteristics are urban, well educated, high-income and willing to pay more for environmental friendly batik. In Sri Lanka the booming tourism sector mainly target the mid- and high-end (international) tourist market to distinguish themselves from other Asian destinations (such as South East Asia).

Clearly, the growing market power of middle-income consumers could provide a business case for retailers, traders and SMEs for designing, marketing and promoting green and fair trade products. The project *Sustainable Building Interior Renovation and Decoration Initiative in China (SUS BIRD)* dealing with sustainable building interior renovation and decoration in China encourages certain national retailers to choose safe, healthy, and environmentally friendly decoration products and appliances with the argument that end-users are getting more and more health conscious. In this way, an increasing number of SWITCH-Asia projects are using the growing LOHAS segment as an argument for convincing the market to shift towards sustainable products.

### **Consumers – affecting production and policy practices**

A few projects said that proof of market demand for cleaner and eco-designed products is required before the policy-makers start putting sustainable consumption policy instruments such as eco-labelling in place. This means policy-



*Lifestyles of health and sustainability (LOHAS) is a demographic defining a particular market segment related to sustainable living, 'green' ecological initiatives, and generally composed of a relatively upmarket and well-educated population segment.*

makers need to make the case for introducing policies for sustainable consumption. For ethical consumption it seems that 'demand leads to regulatory action'. For example, the International Centre for Bamboo and Rattan, leading the *Eco-friendly Bamboo* project, found it very difficult to convince the regulators to act on the new Bamboo Building Code, which would affect the housing and construction practices in Sichuan Province, as long as there was no critical demand for bamboo buildings. For this project stimulating market demand, creating market pull, is seen as essential.

Similarly, the *Lead Elimination Project* aiming to eliminate the manufacture, import and sale of all decorative lead paints, believes that the potential of certain consumer segments can be unlocked to create pressure for the production and policy to shift. Based on the belief that as more people get informed, the public pressure to eliminate lead paints will increase, the project targets general public especially families with children and paediatricians, who have direct contact to families with children, besides bulk procurers such as architects, painters.

### **Growing ethical markets**

SWITCH-Asia projects were frequently motivated by the opportunity of having a share in the continuously growing ethical and LOHAS markets in Europe. For example, the project *Green Products Development and Labelling in Mongolia* stated that the traditional, natural components of certain manufactured products have good potential for meeting international standards for eco-products. This is true not only for the internal market but also as a feature for international trade. The project found it important to link Mongolian products with export potential to the growing markets for 'sustainable products with a distinct cultural background' in Europe, Northern America, and Asia (Japan, Korea, China).

In the same way, the projects *Sustainable Rattan Industries*, *SMART-CEBU* and *SusTex* aimed at establishing market links with the West.

**Huge public purchasing power**

Many SWITCH-Asia projects note that sustainable public procurement is a strong pull for the production of more sustainable products. For example, *SUPP-Urb China* project, which directly targets public procurement centres, mentions that adopting sustainability criteria, national

and local governments significantly increase the market share of ethical goods and services. Several projects target local government, try to affect their purchasing criteria and try to match demand with the greening efforts of the SMEs in the projects (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1: TYPE OF PUBLIC PROCURER ADDRESSED BY SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS**

Project	Type of Public Procurer
<i>Improving energy-efficiency and environmental performance of Chinese SMEs and large companies facilitated by voluntary public-private partnerships</i>	financial institutions
<i>Scaling Sustainable Consumption and Production in the Soybean Processing Industry (SCOPE) (Indonesia)</i>	several civil society organizations
<i>Sustainable Product Innovation in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (SPIN-VCL)</i>	general public procurers
<i>Sustainable Tourism in Bhutan: An Integrated Approach to Production, Consumption and Livelihood Development</i>	tourism councils
<i>Jute: An Eco-friendly Alternative For a Sustainable Future (Bangladesh, West Bengal in India)</i>	public institutions
<i>China Higher Efficiency Power and Distribution Transformers Promotion</i>	state owned enterprises
<i>Promoting Fair Trade and Sustainable Consumption (PRO SUSTAIN) (India)</i>	general public procurers
<i>Lead Paint Elimination (Philippines / regional)</i>	undefined yet
<i>Clean Batik Initiative (Malaysia and Indonesia)</i>	general public procurers
<i>Sustainable Building Interior Renovation and Decoration Initiative in China (SUS BIRD)</i>	national procurement agencies
<i>Establishing E-Waste Channels to Enhance Environment Friendly Recycling (WEEE-Recycle) (India)</i>	general public procurers
<i>Sustainable Public Procurement in Urban China</i>	general public procurers
<i>Improving resource efficiency for the production and recycling of electronic products by adoption of waste tracking system (China)</i>	general public procurers

## 3.2 CONSUMPTION CHALLENGES ADDRESSED IN THE SWITCH-ASIA PROGRAMME

Often, a series of barriers needs to be overcome in order to unlock the consumer power and the market pull potential.

### Lack of awareness

Irrespective of the type of consumer groups targeted, the number one barrier mentioned by the SWITCH-Asia projects in our survey was the lack of information about green and fair products, and the capacity of (public and private) buyers to interpret that information (See Figure 9).

For example, the *Pro-Sustain* project found that consumers had little awareness of fair trade standards. Only 37% of the consumers interviewed in their baseline survey said they knew about the concept of fair trade. And only 35% of students knew what fair trade meant.

Low awareness on standards and labels is not unique to fair trade. The *SusTex* project seeking to promote the production and consumption of eco-friendly textiles and improve employment and working conditions of artisans, conducted a market survey regarding the popularity of eco-textile labels and came to similar conclusions. One interesting finding was that, in spite of be-

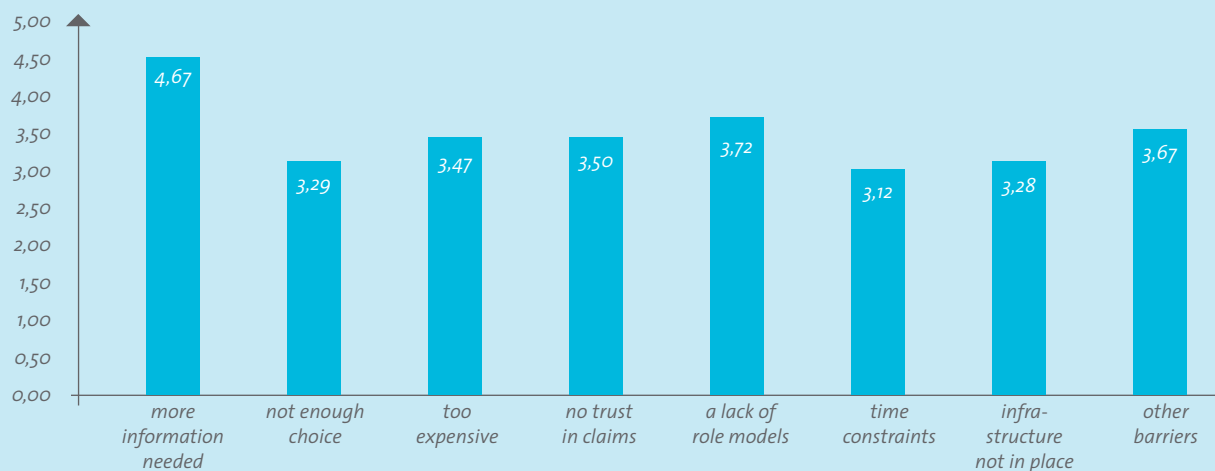
### BARRIERS ADDRESSED FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

- Lack of awareness
- Cost sensitivity
- Lack of tools for transparency
- Poor accessibility
- Poor marketing and branding
- Traditional image
- Interplay of factors for behaviour change
- Lack of capacity among public procurers

ing inexistence for 16 years, the Indian eco-label 'Eco Mark' had not really caught on with buyers. There are no Eco Mark certified textile producers in India. Producers feel the label does not give them any perceptible benefit because of the limited awareness of consumers. Producers also feel that the Eco Mark is not globally recognised and will not be accepted by their overseas clients.

Lack of knowledge has come out as a major barrier in China, as well. In another citywide survey done by the project *Implementing Sustainable Consumption in Civil Society of Urban China (SC in Urban China)* in Tianjin (143 respondents), 30% of the respondents said that they didn't choose a green product as they didn't quite understand the features of these products.

FIGURE 9: IMPORTANCE DEGREE OF PRINCIPAL BARRIERS FOR ETHICAL PURCHASE AND USE BY HOUSEHOLDS



A total number of 44 projects were asked to rank the barriers they observed for household behaviour change. 1 means low importance and 5 means very important. Other barriers mentioned include lack of a legal framework, serious implementation of policy, lack of motivation and orientation towards status



In a big survey done by the *GetGreenVN Sustainable Living and Working in Vietnam (Get Green)* project, which aims at identifying and implementing opportunities for shifting consumption choices, the biggest barrier mentioned was lack of knowledge. Another obvious barrier that came out of the survey was presumption of expensiveness. So the consumers stated their expectation that green products would be more expensive than the regular ones. Higher prices normally stem from the investments being made in product quality and the development of socially responsible and environment friendly production standards, but end-users do not generally know this.

#### **Cost sensitivity**

Price is another big barrier in the creation of markets for environment friendly products. High price was commonly mentioned as a market challenge by the consumers interviewed by the SWITCH-Asia projects *Pro-Sustain*, *Eco-friendly Bamboo*, and *Eco-Jute*.

A market survey by the *SusTex* project found that, despite an increasing awareness and interest in eco-friendly products by the middle-class, especially young working professionals and women, most respondents were reluctant to pay a premium even when they received watertight assurances about the eco-friendliness of a product. This shows despite trust building efforts, price sensitivity might stay as a barrier.

#### **Lack of tools for transparency**

One of the most obvious barriers to overcome is the weak communication of product informa-

tion to consumers. Especially, for corporate purchasers, there are usually no tools to help them understand why resource-efficiency is pushing prices up. Without information being made available on product quality and pricing, i.e. with a lack of transparency on these issues, end-users are confused. In the SWITCH-Asia project *Higher Efficiency Transformers* the biggest barrier for end-users in buying the new transformers was the unavailability of this sort of information. In the use-phase for transformers many variables can affect the operation costs and this has meant it has been difficult for users to compare prices between different transformers. In the past, consumers did not have any indicators for their purchasing decision process.

#### **Poor accessibility**

Lack of product knowledge and high prices are preventing faster growth in the market for green products. But so is their access and availability. Projects like *Pro-Sustain*, *Sustainable Rattan*, *Eco-Jute* and *Clean Batik Initiative* are aware of the barriers and are using a wide range of strategies to increase the supply of their green products in the market place. Consumer groups face challenges not only at the point of purchase but also at the end-of-life stage that the SWITCH-Asia projects are trying to address. For example, the *WEEE-Recycle* project has been making waste collection centres accessible to both households and bulk users.

#### **Poor marketing and branding**

Poor marketing and branding of environment friendly products can be barriers for market ex-





pansion. According to the *Green Products and Labelling* project, Mongolian consumers strongly appreciate traditional (rooted) products but they also have high expectations of quality and availability. Good availability of high quality, imported alternatives is attracting consumers away from items “made in Mongolia”. This is a huge barrier for this SWITCH-Asia project which aims to enhance the production and sales of locally produced, sustainable Mongolian products.

### Traditional image

The traditional image of products can be an obstacle for consumers. According to research by the *Eco-Friendly Jute* project, jute diversified products in India have been positioned low price–low quality, thus the perception of consumers have developed accordingly. Jute diversified products are actually conveniently priced, and of good quality. The positioning should have been conveniently priced good quality products.

**TABLE 2: BARRIERS ON THE PATH TOWARDS ETHICAL CONSUMPTION AS IDENTIFIED BY THE SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS**

 <b>Pull Barriers (market demand)</b>	 <b>Push barriers (market supply)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End-user is cost conscious and seeks lowest price</li> <li>• Indian market focuses on products not brands (concept of brand value is not advanced) (<i>Pro-Sustain</i>)</li> <li>• Consumer rights (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>), health and safety issues are not readily understood by consumers</li> <li>• Limited data on consumer trends and behaviour</li> <li>• Environment friendly products are associated with rural living, being in nature, and hence regarded as ‘products of the poor’ (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>)</li> <li>• Lack of trust in the quality of green products (<i>Eco-friendly Bamboo</i>)</li> <li>• Lack of transparency on product price and quality (<i>Transformers</i>)</li> <li>• Only high-income market segments pay attention to environmental issues (e.g. furniture and interiors) (<i>SUS BIRD, CBI</i>)</li> <li>• Disposal - consumers do not know what to do when the product becomes obsolete (<i>WEEE-Recycle</i>)</li> <li>• Disposal - poorly accessible collection centres if any (<i>WEEE-Recycle</i>)</li> <li>• Disposal - collection services, if any, are often informal and unorganised (<i>WEEE-Recycle</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supplier SMEs (e.g. farmers) are sceptical as to whether there is really a market for ethical products (<i>Pro-Sustain</i>)</li> <li>• Products with a differentiated advantage are still to reach the shelf (lack of availability) (<i>Pro-Sustain</i>)</li> <li>• Brand/retailer company still needs sourcing support. For example, entrepreneurs like SfC need help in finding relevant suppliers (<i>Pro-Sustain</i>)</li> <li>• No coordinated effort for communication among intermediaries. For example no common voice for fair trade (<i>Pro-Sustain</i>)</li> <li>• Lack of potential to implement sustainable product design (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>)</li> <li>• Lack of interest in capacity-building on eco-design (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>)</li> <li>• Shifting mindsets towards sustainability takes a lot of time (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>)</li> <li>• SMEs have limited capital to invest in sustainable design</li> <li>• Informal operation (<i>SPIN-VCL</i>)</li> <li>• Implementation of ‘extended producer responsibility’, such as take-back systems, is costly for producers (<i>WEEE-Recycle</i>)</li> </ul>



**TABLE 3: BARRIERS FOR SUSTAINABLE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT: THE CHALLENGES THAT ARE HINDERING PUBLIC CONSUMERS TO TAKE UP SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION IN EACH CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING STAGE** (16 out of 44 SWITCH-Asia projects responded)

**What factors hinders policy-makers to purchase, use and dispose sustainably?**

- Limited skill of responsible personnel and poor data availability (e.g. for LCA);
- No link between national eco-label programmes and public procurement practice;
- Limited knowledge of economies of scale and potential of government procurement to shift the market towards SCP;
- Lack of cost evaluation versus environmental and social economic gains evaluation tools;
- Poor communication to ministries of finance about the importance of additional/premium funds for procurement of sustainable products;
- Poor linkages between government subsidies and sustainability of product/production;
- Limited availability and variety of green products in the market;
- Lack of infrastructure, procedures and guidelines for take-back and recycling

**Interplay of factors for behaviour change**

SWITCH-Asia projects mentioned that often an interplay of factors both on the supply and demand sides need to be addressed (See Table 2). For example, according to the *SPIN-VCL* project, one demand side, households lack knowledge on basic consumer rights while on the supply side, companies do not have the skills and capacity in place to implement innovative design approaches to improve the environmental and social performance of products.

**Lack of capacity among public procurers**

When asked for barriers hindering public procurers to take up ethical consumption practices, 16 out of 44 SWITCH-Asia projects listed a variety of factors at three stages of decision-making (see Table 3).

The most frequently mentioned factor was lack of capacity on green public procurement. For example, SWITCH-Asia project *SUPP-Urb China* mentioned that staff in public procurement centres (PPCs) were found to lack technical support, information, and know-how regarding eco-friendly products. Often the purchasers in these centres have little knowledge of technology products. The staff lacks awareness and knowledge of the meaning of ‘green procurement’, ‘green product standards’ and ‘life-cycle assessment’. Such lack of capacity is a serious constraint in green procurement. Despite a Directive promoting green public procurement and lists

of eco-friendly products and producers issued in 2006, procurement is often based on product price only. Getting hold of sustainability information along the supply chain of a product is a big challenge for PPCs. Their staff lack the opportunity and capacity to verify product information.



# 4

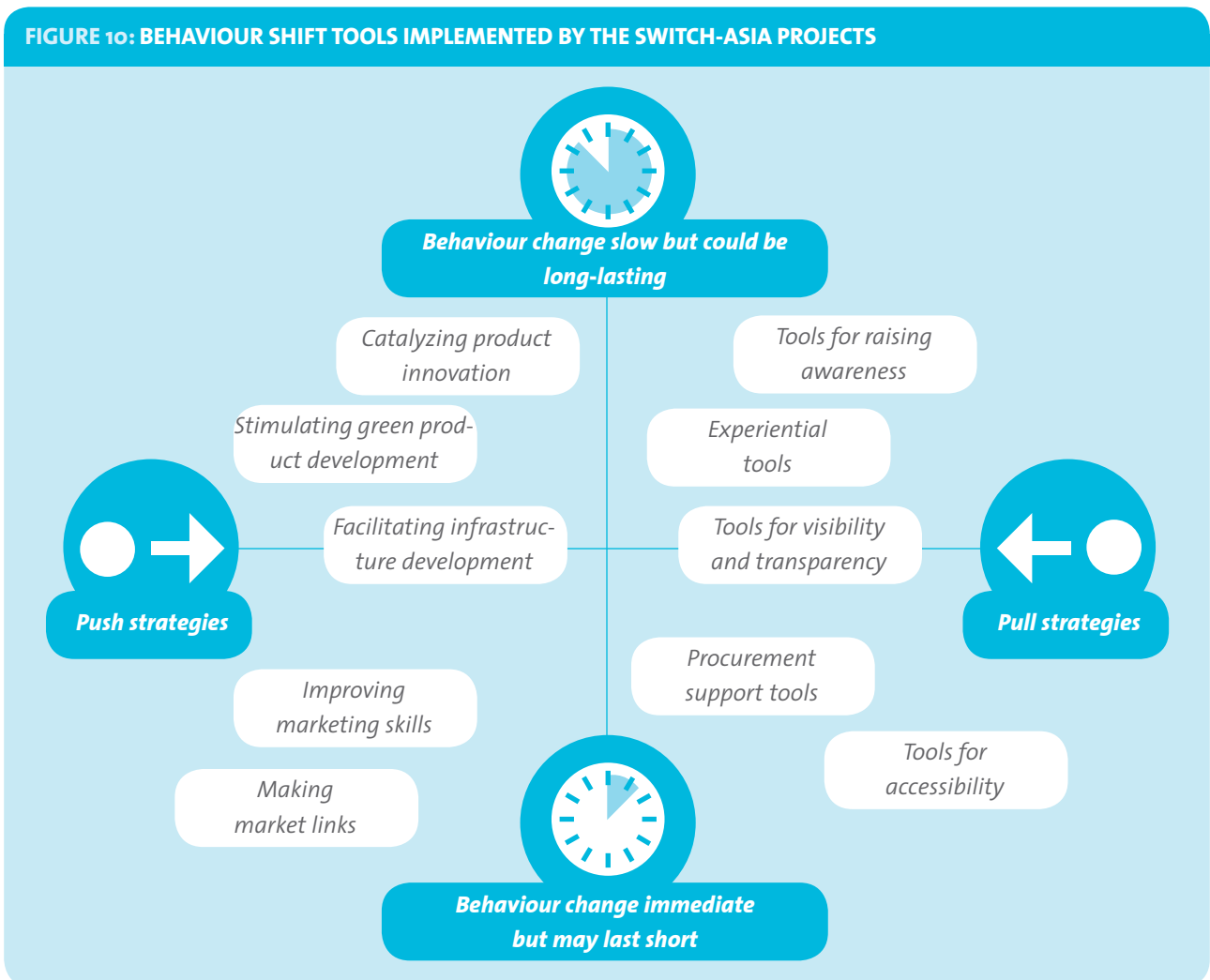
## STRATEGIES AND TOOLS TO MOTIVATE CONSUMERS

The SWITCH-Asia projects determine what is preventing their target consumers from making more ethical purchases. They then find or create opportunities to remove these “barriers” and develop a range of strategies and tools to encourage consumers to adopt more sustainable consumption practices.

The strategies and tools can be categorised to have more of a ‘pull’ (through market demand) and encourage consumers to purchase or use more sustainable products. Or, they can give

more of a ‘push’ (through supply), helping to provide a more visible supply of goods and services that are more environmentally friendly or socially conscious (X-axis in Figure 10). Another categorisation can be done based on the assessment of whether behaviour change might be happening slowly or fast and whether it could be permanent or temporary (Y-axis in Figure 10). The strategies and tools found within the SWITCH-Asia projects are explained in this Chapter.

FIGURE 10: BEHAVIOUR SHIFT TOOLS IMPLEMENTED BY THE SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS



# 4.1 DESIGNING THE STRATEGY

## Understanding market opportunities

In order to choose and develop the most effective strategies and tools for behaviour change, a good understanding of the market potential is essential. By mid-2012, only a few SWITCH-Asia projects had done this including *Eco-Jute in Bangladesh and India*. This project carried out a series of research activities including a baseline study, domestic market research, and a service assessment, at the outset of the project to help set priorities.

The *Green Products and Labelling* project in Mongolia studied the potential, and interest, for sustainable products amongst suppliers. A number of SMEs had been targeted for possible capacity building on sustainable products and for taking part in the Green Product Challenge. The sectors in which they worked – leather, wool, food, wood products and handicrafts – were profiled and those products manufactured in Mongolia were highlighted alongside their domestic markets. The most important environmental impacts, or ‘hotspots’, were described for the leather, wool and cashmere, and food product chains for project partners to gain a common understanding. The resulting reports gave the partners sufficient insight to be able to select regions and product groups on which the project could focus.

This project prepared a second report on international sustainability labels, standards, and requirements with which the Mongolian eco-label standard was to be aligned. This information was used in a seminar on international green labels where clear conclusions could be made on the capacity building needs for the Mongolian National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MNCCI) and the Mongolian Agency for Standardisation and Metrology (MASM).

In the *SPIN-VCL* project, three technical studies were carried out to gather market information from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia including one on the potential for ‘sustainable production innovation’ and one on market requirements (including elements such as environmental requirements, certification, labelling, and chain of custody). A third study focused on marketing channels and approaches and included elements of sustainable procurement. Specific aspects relating to each country and sector were to be covered within each study.

## Analysing target segments

In order to get a good grasp of what would encourage target segments to change their behaviour and what would obstruct them (‘motivators’ and ‘barriers’), market surveys, assessments and information exchange forums were frequently used by several SWITCH-Asia projects.

The *SusTex* project conducted domestic research to identify and assess the demand for sustainable eco-friendly textile products in India. Their study included an analysis of eco-friendly products in India over the last 3-5 years. It collected information on the domestic market including its size and structure, future trends, potential niches, current prices, buyers, and useful market contacts. The information was then used to formulate an effective marketing strategy for eco-friendly textile products, targeting domestic consumers.

In the case of the *Pro-Sustain* project, research had already identified market opportunities prior to launch of this two-year SWITCH-Asia project. Market research previously completed by International Resources for Fairer Trade (IRFT), as well as secondary research compiled by Shop For Change, indicates openness on the part of upper middle-class consumers to buy and even pay premiums for fair trade and sustainable products, if they are available.

In August 2012, the project *Implementing Sustainable Consumption in Civil Society of Urban China (SC in Urban China)*, which has the aim of fostering and mainstreaming citizens’ sustainable consumption patterns and behaviour conducted two city-wide surveys in Beijing and Tianjin to understand the residents’ awareness and environmental attitudes. One of the surprising findings of the survey was taken as an input for the preparation of communications materials taking the consumers from where they are: 77% of the respondents said that the main purpose of sustainable consumption would be for health, while only 21% said that sustainable consumption would benefit the environment.

Similarly, *Get Green Sustainable Living and Working in Vietnam (Get Green)* project, at the end of 2012, carried out a big survey with 2 000 participants and tried to get a deeper insight into Vietnamese consumers’ awareness and behaviour toward more sustainable consumption. Middle higher income segments were targeted.



### Assessing willingness to pay

Though focusing more on business-to-business interface, the unique approach of the SWITCH-Asia *China Higher Efficiency Power and Distribution Transformers Promotion* project is worth to mention. The *Higher Efficiency Transformer* project conducted a market survey on producers and consumers of transformers. The capacity of the manufacturers to produce more efficient transformers was assessed, as well as the consumers' attitude towards pricing. The survey identified the highest and lowest prices that consumers would pay for an efficient transformer. Such market information was very instrumental in shaping the messages and arguments to convince the end-users or consumers of transformers to purchase those with improved energy efficiency.

The survey results will show motivating and hindering factors in the Vietnamese that can affect the acceptance of sustainable products and behaviours.

Furthermore, *Get Green* utilises participatory group research involving 5-6 focus groups (middle income consumers). In the first part of the focus groups the project staff directs the attention of the consumers to sustainability and gains insights on the current knowledge and perception of sustainability. Second, information about their daily lives is collected and a set of exercises is introduced that will give insight into their more latent needs and desires. The third part consists of the homework exercises to uncover the willingness to change and possible changes of current behaviour patterns. These focus groups cover the topics of energy, water, waste, transport and food areas.

### Framing the concept

In the *Get Green* project, a framework describing different levels from raising awareness till achievement of 'green lifestyle' is developed in order to put the projects actions into perspective and develop a collective understanding. It was set in 6 different levels. First one is to increase awareness of sustainable products that are there. Second one is to increase awareness of people's own behaviour. Third one is to influence short time buying and consumption behaviour. Fourth one is to increase the awareness in the long term and continue with this. Fifth one is to transform it as lifestyle, and the last one is to transfer own knowledge and lifestyle onto other people.

### BOX 1: HOW INSTRUMENTAL WAS HIGH EFFICIENT TRANSFORMERS PROJECT'S MARKET SURVEY IN SHAPING THE RIGHT MESSAGES FOR END-USERS?

*The key aim of the project is to create the advantaged market for the producers of higher efficient transformers, which was assisted by developing critical consideration for end users at the assessment of resource constraint by national energy saving policies and benefits from the procurement of higher efficient transformers at the energy/cost saving.*

*In the case of the Shanghai Zhixin Transformer Company, only produce higher efficient distribution transformers, stated that the good market campaign is to help consumers to evaluate the payback period and savings at the electric bills by using higher efficient transformers based on the load rate, operating years, electric price and net present value when it was considered as the investment of energy resource saving.*

*For example, the price of 100kVA amorphous metal distribution transformer was about €12,700 that higher than the minimum efficiency one with 25% mark-up. When the consumer look at the reduction of loss by 60% for the next 20 years in operating, it will easy to help them to make decision with the 5 years' payback period.*

*Furthermore, according to the market survey, there are 374GVA (870,000 units) at the yearly produced distribution transformer market, we can see the avoided cost of a new coal-fired plant (70% in China) because it will reduce the greenhouse gas emission with the cost-effectiveness of the more-efficient transformer designs.*

## 4.2 PULL STRATEGIES (LEVERAGING DEMAND)



‘Pull’ strategies focus on tackling barriers that might have locked consumer power and on releasing it could again create demand for sustainable products. In other words, these strategies aim at enhancing awareness, accessibility, visibility and product experience. These tools work directly on the behaviour of consumer groups, while push strategies work more on the practices of suppliers with an indirect effect on consumer groups.

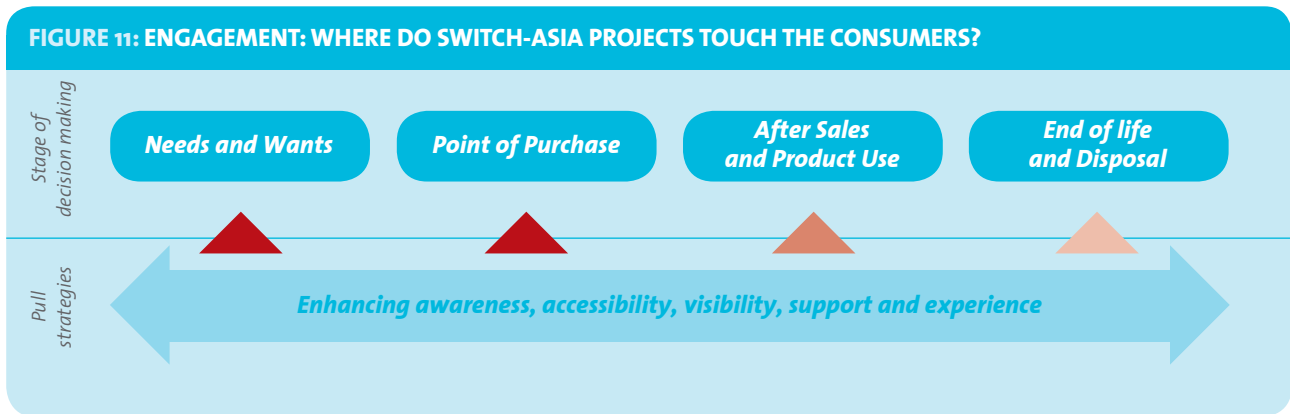
The SWITCH-Asia projects have mainly worked on the strategies to create a shift from a conventional product or service to a greener alternative, i.e. at the point of purchase (see Figure 11). Only several projects have developed pull side strategies to encourage consumers to have a resource efficient product use experience. Last but not least, a few have worked on strategies to enable consumers for environment friendly end-of-life management (disposal) of products. An overview of the tools based on the strategic objectives is given in Table 4.

**TABLE 4: PULL STRATEGIES: OVERVIEW OF TOOLS USED BY SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS TO CREATE CONSUMER DEMAND FOR GREEN AND FAIR PURCHASE, USE AND END-OF-LIFE MANAGEMENT**

BUYER	SEGMENTS INCLUDED	TOOLS
<b>Households</b> (individual consumers, private consumers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-income consumer class (A1)</li> <li>• Middle class</li> <li>• Students at schools and colleges</li> <li>• Women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair trade label and brand</li> <li>• Campaigns at schools and colleges</li> <li>• Films and movies (e.g. the What is Fair? Film showing in movie theatres)</li> <li>• Participation in festivals, events and exhibitions</li> <li>• Social network (e.g. facebook)</li> <li>• Media campaigns</li> <li>• Trade fairs</li> <li>• Establishment of a common fair trade brand</li> <li>• Street theatre (e.g. <i>Cotton Production SPRING</i>)</li> <li>• Get Green Clubs</li> <li>• Green product label (food)</li> </ul>
<b>Bulk buyers</b> (corporate procurement, institutional consumers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big brand companies</li> <li>• School management</li> <li>• Hotels</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate gifting programmes</li> <li>• Fair trade label</li> <li>• Trade fairs</li> <li>• Eco-park collective brand’</li> <li>• Green certification scheme for hotels</li> <li>• Minimum energy performance standards</li> </ul>
<b>Governments</b> (public buyers, institutional consumers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ad-hoc dialogue with Governments and Ministries (e.g. IRFT)</li> <li>• Service delivery (e.g. SFC with Kudumbashee)</li> <li>• Awareness-raising workshop (e.g. <i>WEEE-Recycle</i> project)</li> <li>• Sustainable procurement guidelines</li> </ul>



**FIGURE 11: ENGAGEMENT: WHERE DO SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS TOUCH THE CONSUMERS?**



### TOOLS FOR RAISING AWARENESS

Awareness-raising tools focus on informing the consumer about what green and fair products could mean, why these products might be more expensive, and how consumers could make a difference with their purchase and use of such products and services. Consumer groups are informed in a variety of ways on green purchasing practices, low-impact use and safe disposal.

Campaigns can draw attention to the social and environmental impacts of production practices, as well as to the power of the consumer to make a difference.

Amongst the SWITCH-Asia projects, *Pro-Sustain* used campaigning to raise awareness on fair trade standards and targets particularly with upper middle-class consumers and college students. The projects awareness-raising campaigns utilise the means of mass communication (TV, newspaper, internet), use celebrity endorsement for events, ensure a producer-consumer interface at exhibitions and in-store promotions, use crea-

tive internet-based outreach, and show short films in cinemas. World Fair Trade Day celebrations each year are used especially as a platform to distribute information material.

In an effort to create demand for an environmentally friendly produced commodity the *Eco-friendly Bamboo* project organised customer and public awareness events. Events for retailers allowed households to be informed at the shops: brochures about bamboo products and the advantages of bamboo compared with other raw materials like plastic were distributed. The project then interviewed participants with a view to improving the format of future events. As a strategy, the events are organised as part of larger fora or in cooperation with strategic partners such as the State Forestry Department. This allows them to illustrate the new market opportunities and profile bamboo at a level higher than it currently enjoys. For example, the first customer awareness-raising event took place at the EU-China Bamboo High Technology Cooperation Forum with the participation of a few EU experts on special bamboo building materials. The potential behind the use of new technologies was explained. There was also an exhibition at the EU-China Fair, which attracted many households.

The *SC in Urban China* project developed toolkits for awareness raising on sustainable consumption. The toolkits are being used by municipal and district consumer associations, target retailers as well as citizens. The toolkits are also delivered to associate partners





of local authorities in both Beijing and Tianjin. Local consumer associations are using toolkits in their community trainings, workshops, and communications as well as in their SC action planning. Retailers are using the toolkits of Eco-labels in identifying green product and using best practices as a reference in their green procurements. Local authorities are using the toolkits as reference in their policy practices, e.g formulating new policies and revising the existing



policies. Green Consumption manuals and green shopping bags are used for communicating public SC and for raising public SC awareness. For example, a handbook presenting basic knowledge on sustainable consumption was prepared and distributed to consumers free of charge in the target supermarkets.

In addition, a train-the-trainer course was carried out at the Nankai University in Tianjin Direct offering an opportunity for consumer associations, service providers of universities, local authorities and representatives of retailers meeting together and exchanging and sharing experiences in identifying green products and implementing sustainable consumption activities. *Get Green* project partners also prepared capacity building material and trained the im-

plementing project staff on sustainable consumption issues and participatory research, human-centred design and co-creation processes. The training material is based on the state of the art study done on sustainable consumption and consumer behaviour worldwide, lessons learned, existing methodologies as well as the preparatory analysis done on the current status of sustainable consumption in Vietnam, including existing policy instruments.

Raising awareness is the first step towards changing people's behaviour, it is making consumers aware of sustainability issues and the next step is that people realise their own impact on these issues, after that you can start the behaviour change process. Awareness tools that are used in *Get Green* are for example big events, media performances or distributing the knowledge through channels such as facebook, the network and consumer meetings.

Projects often partner with media to disseminate basic information on environment friendly consumer behaviour. In the *SC in Urban China* project, consumer associations partnered and signed contracts with the local media for awareness raising activities. For example, Beijing Consumer Association has signed communication contract with China News Special and Beijing local newspapers for promoting and communicating sustainable consumption best practices and for publishing sustainable consumption related product quality testing results.

Table 5 illustrates the awareness raising efforts from several other SWITCH-Asia projects.



**TABLE 5: AWARENESS RAISING APPROACHES – SOME EXAMPLES OF TOOLS USED BY SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS TO CREATE CONSUMER DEMAND FOR GREEN AND FAIR PRODUCTS**

PROJECT	TOOLS UTILIZED BY SWITCH-ASIA PROJECTS FOR AWARENESS RAISING
<b>Green Products and Labelling project in Mongolia</b>	Public campaigns using chambers of commerce and national fairs, to promote green products. MNCCI organised the second, of what is hoped to be an annual, Organic and Green Products National Fair in 2011. An encouraging 30 manufacturers and 82 products from companies already involved in the project were present.
<b>Clean Batik Initiative</b>	More than 13 domestic and international-level exhibitions in Indonesia and Malaysia undertaken to promote environment-friendly versions of traditional batik amongst the general public.
<b>Eco-Jute</b>	A consumer campaign to encourage consumers to buy green versions of traditional 'jute' products, based on market research findings in Bangladesh and India.
<b>WEEE-Recycle</b>	The general public and bulk consumers targeted to improve the collection of e-waste. Poster competitions and e-waste calendars for schools (targeting 500 children), TV spot, activities in public places such as the Big Bazaar in Bangalore, programmes and collection drives for apartments and schools, door-to-door campaigning by volunteers as part of a community service programme in Bangalore, and a workshop for bulk consumers at the Delhi State Government Departments.
<b>Greening Sri Lanka Hotels</b>	International tourism fairs and workshops sensitise tour operators and other trade bodies in both Sri Lanka and Europe to the greening efforts of Sri Lankan hotels. A seminar was held in Colombo for resident managers and travel agents, and special tools encourage guests to consume consciously on hotel premises (towel and linen re-use, switching off lights). Hotels display a certificate requesting guests to cooperate with conservation initiatives.
<b>SUPP-Urb</b>	Sustainable procurement promoted to municipal, bulk consumers. The public procurement centre, Qinhaongdao, invited their green suppliers to exhibit their products to the public: 20,000 visitors attended an exhibition, including public officials from other provinces. It has become an annual event.

### TOOLS FOR VISIBILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Visibility tools help consumers to differentiate 'at a glance' between sustainable products and services and those in mainstream markets.

The *Pro-Sustain* Project created a common fair trade brand for increasing the visibility of fair trade products. An umbrella brand was created for Fair Trade Forum - India (FTF-I) members with dedicated fair trade shops. FTF-I launched 'Fair Trade India' at six shops in May 2011 on World Fair Trade Day, making it the first fair trade umbrella brand for shops in India. By October 2011, 13 shops were under the brand. Guidelines, a retail code book, and a brand manual, were developed. A marketing and distribution strategy is in place





for 10 shops, which are also display and sell products from other FTF-I members.

The *SusTex* project also followed the strategy of collective brand building. Their market research revealed 70 different certification schemes for textiles. Especially due to the high cost of the certification process for such labels, the textile manufactures instead are developing an umbrella brand that communicates the positive aspects and environmental friendliness of the textile park and the textiles produced in the park. The umbrella brand will be promoted at fair trade shows and through trade journals and videos. Establishing a strong supply chain is crucial for the credibility of the brand; each stage must be examined and designed for best environmental performance. Social criteria are also important.

Certification and labelling schemes not only enhance the visibility of green products and services but also contribute to transparency and credibility, especially if they are third party audited. *Greening Sri Lankan Hotels* is working with the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority to develop a voluntary Green Certification Scheme for hotels, to ensure sustainable operations can be recognised by tourists, tour operators and government institutions. Besides increasing the visibility of better performing hotels, certification schemes for hotels will create motivation for self-regulation through the adoption of green practices on the supply side.

Another visibility tool is the Green Product Label Scheme envisioned by the *Green Products and Labelling* project. In order to make the green Mongolian products visible, the project had the MASM and the relevant ministries including Ministry of Nature Environment and Tourism (MONET) and Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Light Industry (MOFALI) on board as associates.

**Far left: Geraldine, the French designer, in discussion with the Indian designer and Nayika, JIPPTL member.**

**Above: Nayika's demo-shop in Jaipur**

Prior to the project efforts, MNCCI was involved with an eco-labelling award scheme and MONET had started the development of an official eco-labelling criteria and certification framework to be implemented by MASM. MONET and MASM took the lead in the development of the Mongolian eco-label framework and a new version of the Mongolian Eco-label Standard was drafted in July 2011. This important multi-stakeholder project intervention seemed to set the floor for an active and timely eco-label development and implementation in Mongolia. The ambition of the responsible MONET department is now that an eco-label regulation is submitted and accepted by Parliament in 2012.

The *China Higher Efficiency Transformers* project supports the introduction of new national standards for efficient transformers. The project also contributes to the redesign of a mandatory energy efficiency label and a higher efficiency certificate for top performing transformers. These initiatives will pave the way for efficient transformers to be included in the China Catalogue of High-Efficiency Products, which can bring tax advantages for the producers. The catalogue is used in public procurement. Manufacturers and end-users discussed the increase in efficiency and subsequent price rise, with project facilitation.

Product design fulfilling consumer needs and respecting environmental issues can make green products more visible. This has been the entry point for the *SusTex* project to work with a European designer, who helped in conceptualising the product and communicating with the mar-



ket. Following one year of preparations for textile products from the eco-park where the project is based, to enter the fair trade market, they could be promoted under one brand and become real eye-catchers.

The *SMART CEBU* project similarly wanted to use the power of design on consumer decision-making. The Eco Design Training Programme with a European designer allowed gift, toy and houseware companies to realise the significance of shaping an identity: emphasising the importance of thinking beyond one's immediate needs in fusing creativity and sustainability. Through extensive theoretical and hands-on workshops, one-on-one consultancy and online discussions, companies transcended from being mere manufacturers to becoming responsible designers who respect the value of nature.

### TOOLS FOR ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility tools primarily refer to improvement of distribution channels for green products. In addition, projects might work on enhancing accessibility to collection points for environmental friendly disposal.

Having accepted 'accessibility' is a major issues for fair trade products, the *Pro-Sustain* project implemented an accessibility strategy by promoting distribution firstly through special fair trade shops and secondly through big retailer brands. Firstly, FTF-I members distribute their products via dedicated fair trade shops as mentioned in the previous section. Secondly, mainstream brands and retail chains are acquired for distributing the other fair trade label called 'Shop for Change'. They are asked to sign licencing agreements for using the certification label and selling certified products.

Concerning the environment friendly end-of-life management of products, such as the recycling advocated by the *WEEE Recycle* project, the effective collection of waste becomes a major task. Making waste collection points more accessible could be key. *WEEE Recycle* links up with consumer groups generating e-waste.. For example, the Manufacturers Association for Information Technology (MAIT) is working closely on large brands, 'bulk generators', and their 'take-back' infrastructure in an effort reduce the collection of e-waste in cities. Linkages are also established with State Governments. In Delhi,

in collaboration with the Department of Environment, a series of awareness workshops are being conducted to provide basic information on the responsibilities of bulk consumers and their role in the channelisation of e-waste in the city. There are now 15 e-waste bins in 15 government offices and three collection centres have been established by the informal sector.. Backward and forward linkages of these companies are established with generators and recyclers of e-waste. In Pune, the Pune Municipal Corporation has allocated five spaces for the collection and handling (SWaCH) of e-waste. A large-scale collection system is being established whereby SWaCH members collect e-waste from more than 4 lakh (400 000) households in Pune (Pimpri Chinchwad). Large brands like Nokia and HP have come forward to work together with the project to strengthen collection systems in Delhi and Pune to start with. In Bangalore, four companies are already collecting e-waste from most public offices and tech parks. Saahas, for example, has linked up with most of the resident welfare associations in the city and is channelling their e-waste to these four companies.

### EXPERIENTIAL TOOLS

Seeing and experiencing how sustainable production differs from conventional practices could be very convincing for the bulk buyers to change behaviour. This is the experience from the *Sustainable Rattan* project aiming to boost the export of sustainable rattan products and improve the environmental performance of the processing industry. This project engages with international buyers through raising awareness about rattan, deforestation, certification, and introducing retailers to rattan producers in situ, and inviting both to trade fairs. Retailers introduced to rattan producers during study tours. These were particularly successful where the business expectations of both parties made clear and closer business relationships built. European retailers discovered many important environmental aspects of production of which they were not previously aware.

The *Eco-friendly Bamboo* project is promoting the use of bamboo for construction by organising fairs and campaigns. Through the use of demonstration houses, it is assuring consumers of the quality and safety of bamboo as a building material.

**PROCUREMENT SUPPORT TOOLS**

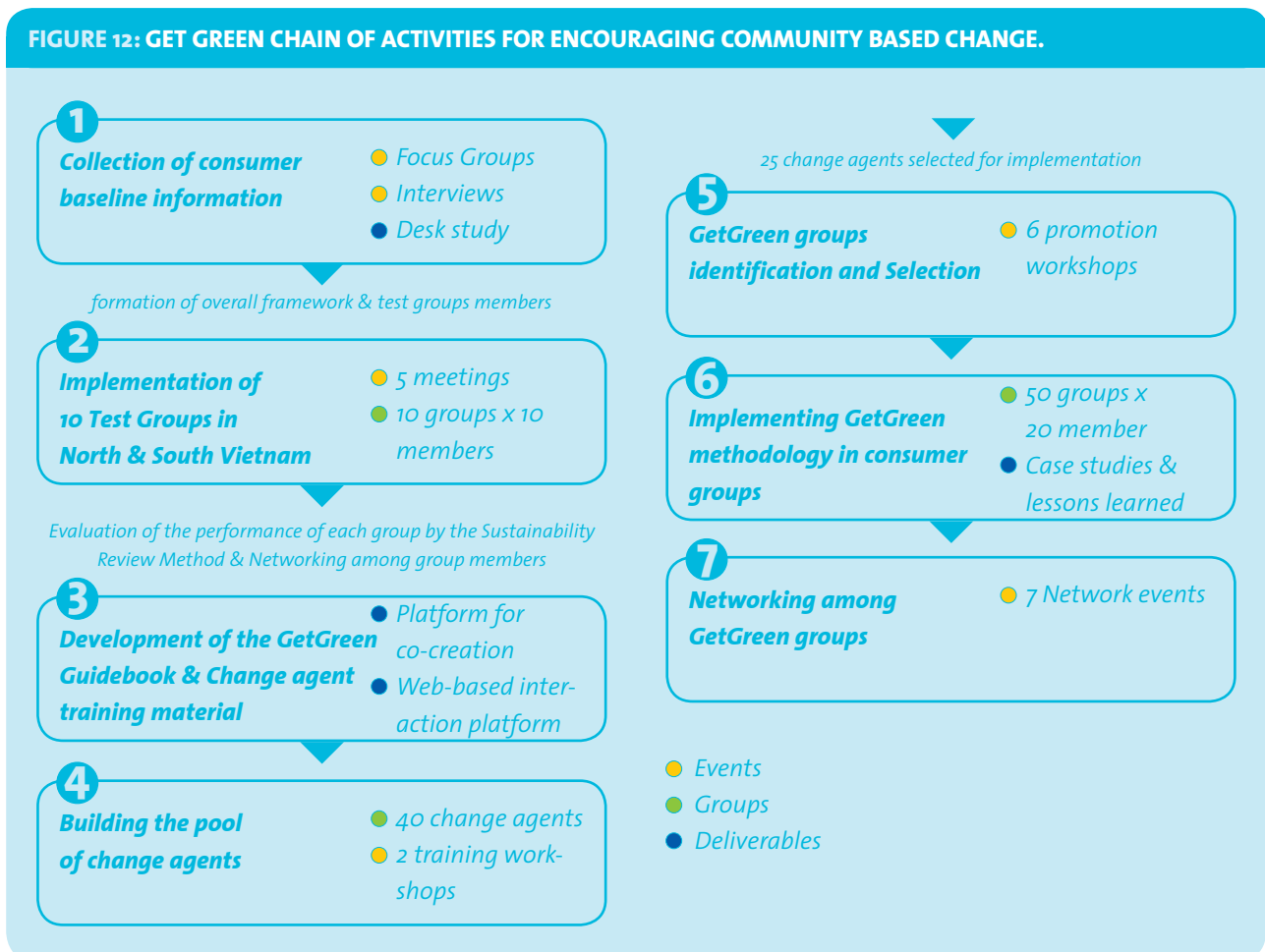
Clear guidance on procurement criteria and procedures can empower bulk buyers and encourage them to exercise their muscle in the market. For example, the Chinese scientific partners of *SuPP-Urb* project developed tools for impact assessment and were able to show positive results in terms of energy, water and oil saved by the public procurement centres when they purchased green products. Carbon dioxide emissions were also reduced. The project produced technical guidelines for the target cities, which included European good practice, experience and lessons learned. Project partner Nankai University, a scientific partner, provided technical support to the procurement centres in product evaluation, including life-cycle assessment. By introducing the methodology of life-cycle assessment to sustainable public procurement, the economic cost of a product can be more accurately reflected in the evaluation of tenders during public procurement. New policies were formulated in Tianjin city based on life-cycle costing and the public

procurement centre increased the evaluation score for green products which in turn encouraged enterprises to produce green products to increase their chance of winning a tender.

The *SPIN-VCL* project also worked with the national government on environment friendly procurement. Three national workshops, in the three project countries, were held on the ‘promotion of sustainable public procurement’ (60 participants). Three draft plans for the development of National Sustainable Products Procurement Platforms were completed. A summary report covered the key lessons and experiences which could be useful when revising the existing manual on Sustainable Public Procurement.

In the *China Higher Efficiency Transformers* project, a package of minimum performance product standards and a total cost accounting tool for supporting the decision-making of bulk buyers (end-users) of transformers was developed. This total cost owning tool is the first to help energy managers with their procurement decisions, enabling them to calculate the cost

**FIGURE 12: GET GREEN CHAIN OF ACTIVITIES FOR ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY BASED CHANGE.**



of their investments over a whole life-cycle. It is a CD-based programme that takes technical data from the transformer, including its location within the system, and its planned use, and weights it to be able to indicate the most efficient transformer for the system. This provides a unique advantage for consumers because many factors (transformer type, raw material, cost of 'use-phase', position of the transformer within complex systems, etc.) contribute towards the costs.

#### COMMUNITY BASED TOOLS

Several recent SWITCH-Asia projects have tapped into the power of social processes that can present significant impediments to pro-environmental consumer behaviour. They reckon that a particular kind of elaborative social process is vital in 'unfreezing' habitual behaviours and re-negotiating new social norms.

For example, *Get Green* project formed consumer groups, which will be consisting of consumer that can act as "change agents" for the future and during the project they will gradually build up to a community of a thousand conscious consumers. The first group of change agents will come from citizen and civil society organizations. The project will reach out to this community of change agents with promotion material, education material, methods, tools and information in order for them to be able to reach an even larger audience in Vietnam (see Figure 12). The first group of change agents will also go through 3-day training workshop using the *GetGreen Guidebook*. Eventually, a large community with at least 1,000 members in 50 *GetGreen* clubs acting as "change agents" will be created. The project will also promote networking among these change agents for effective impact.

## 4.3 PUSH STRATEGIES (LEVERAGING SUPPLY)



While the pull strategies discussed earlier address consumer groups (households and public procurers) directly, the push strategies concern more the suppliers of 'sustainable products and services'. The push strategies focus on convincing and enabling producers and retailers to put such products in the market.

#### IMPROVING MARKETING SKILLS

The *SPIN-VCL* project improved the target SMEs' knowledge of current and potential markets and customer requirements. It looked at the market possibilities offered by public procurement at the domestic level, and trade fairs or marketing networks at the international level. Nine workshops were prepared to improve marketing skills for companies, and a marketing skills training package was prepared.

The *Clean Batik Initiative* is greening the batik industry in Indonesia and Malaysia and creating environmentally conscious consumers in order to drive the demand of eco-friendly batik. The project addressed batik SMEs with a four-day marketing course, which encompassed gen-

eral marketing concepts, price and negotiation, promotion, trade fairs, and product development and design. The project has been selecting successful designers or entrepreneurs from amongst the participants to help develop a marketing campaign for selected products as a show case. According to project experience, price and negotiation are the biggest issue for the SMEs and most of the targeted SMEs have never done cost calculations before.

#### MAKING MARKET LINKS

Once market needs are clear and products are developed accordingly, the next step for SWITCH-Asia projects targeting European buyers is in finding a match for the producer SMEs. Trade fairs are the most commonly used tool for this. For example, *SMART Cebu* showcased sustainable designs from 12 companies in the gifts, toys and housewares sector in a special setting at the German trade show 'Ambiente 2012'. Sustainable creations using indigenous renewable materials like bamboo, rattan, up-cycled production waste materials or recyclable mono material strategy in metal from 12 companies were showcased.

*Re-Tie Bangladesh* has been helping to reduce environmental threats for Bangladeshi leather producers and to increase the exportability of





their products. A selected group of tanners attended a study tour to Germany and Italy including a visit to an international trade fair. The project fostered the first business contact between members of the Toscana Shoe Manufacturers Association and the leather sector in Hazaribagh,

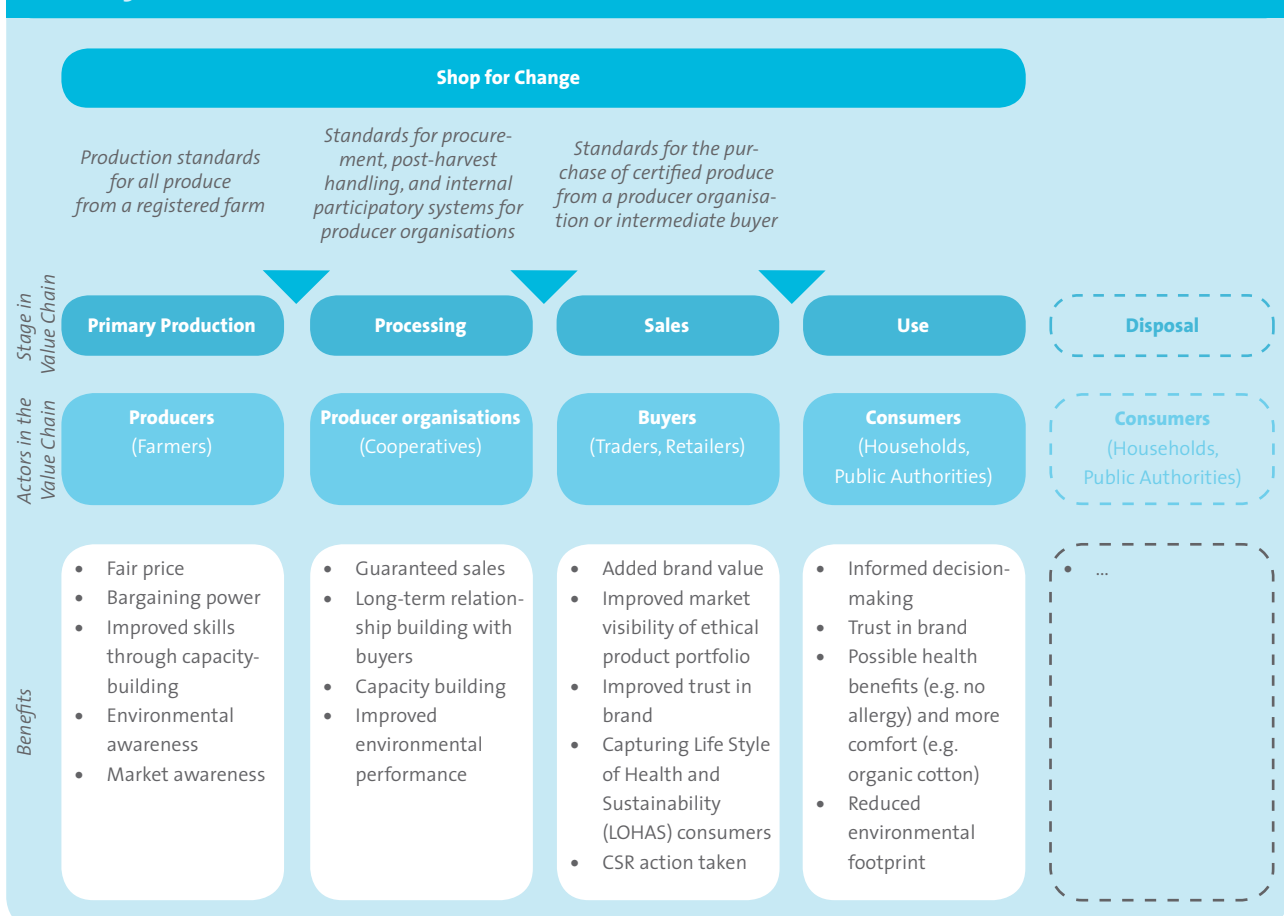
during a study tour to Germany and Belgium. To extend this type of contact, it also prepared an export promotion guide. Other SWITCH-Asia projects taking SMEs to trade fairs include *SusTex*, *Sustainable Rattan*, *Eco-friendly Bamboo*, and the *Clean Batik Initiative*.

In the *Pro-Sustain* project, mainstream brands and retail chains are approached to sign licensing agreements for using the certification label 'Shop for Change' and to begin selling certified products. To motivate the licensees, Shop for Change provides organisational support regarding promotional activities including fashion shows, food tastings, press stories and celebrity endorsements. Shop for Change also provides a supplier matchmaking service for the retailers or brand owners.

### STIMULATING GREEN PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

In the *Green Products and Labelling* project in Mongolia, an innovative tool called the 'Green Product Challenge' was designed to create interest in sustainable production issues among

FIGURE 13: THE SHOP FOR CHANGE MODEL



SMEs and to encourage them to come up with green product ideas. It included in-depth training workshops for manufacturers to develop Green Product Business Plans, and awards for the best plans that would be promoted to potential consumers at a trade fair. However, the process was slightly hampered at the beginning as the project partner MNCCI found the tool too advanced and doubted its suitability and potential for approaching manufacturers with the idea of 'green products'. However, after the initial training seminar, 150 eligible applications were selected from 80 companies interested in promoting their green products for further support (like promotional material and talks with the CCI). Some of these companies attended the Green Products Fair organised in collaboration with Organic Mongolia. This fair was attended by 10 000 visitors and registered sales of 30 000 dollars indicating its huge success. At the fair, Green Product Awards were distributed and five of the previously selected and supported companies received an award.

In the *China Higher Efficiency Transformers* project, eco-design guidelines were developed for encouraging manufacturers to use a set of minimum energy performance standards. At the beginning of the project, they were sceptical and not convinced that they could sell more expensive (though more efficient) transformers. Project experts visited several site power grids and manufacturers: utilities wanted efficient transformers, and manufacturers were afraid of losing business as the price of their products rose. The problem during negotiations was always in balancing the price of high quality raw materials against efficiency over the whole life-span of the products. The standards-making committee, which included project experts, used market data and calculations, and discussed future

procurement policies to reassure manufacturers. Manufacturers were eventually persuaded of the market potential and supported the eco-design guidelines.

The *SuPP-Urb* project focused on the implementation of sustainable public procurement practices and tools in three target cities. A major challenge for the expansion of sustainable procurement at the public procurement centres is their limited mandate for advancing it further. However, there has been some progress: in Lanzhou, for example, an incentive mechanism was created for suppliers of green products. Most contracts provide for a final payment after six months. This particular public procurement centre (Lanzhou) shortened the payment period to two months.

### CATALYSING PRODUCT INNOVATION

Having a creative and inspiring environment could be key for pushing green products in to the market. The *SPIN-VCL* project, for example, is working on setting up a network of local experts and organisations that could provide SMEs with advice and technical expertise to further innovate on their sustainable products. Sustainable product innovation support centres and help desks have been established to train the trainers, experts, consultants from design centres, sector associations, universities, and private consulting firms on sustainable product innovation.

Similarly, in the *Eco-Jute* project, business facilitation units were established to provide short training courses, one-to-one counselling for specific problems, and match-making services between SMEs dealing in jute diversified products, and domestic and international buyers. They are operated by the Micro Industries Development Assistance and Services, an organisation committed to the development of sound and rapidly



growing micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprise sectors in Bangladesh. Access to market and product information is one of the key obstacles for the SMEs and it is already difficult for them to identify niche markets for their green or fair products. The project addresses such challenges through the business facilitation units.

### FACILITATING INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Many SWITCH-Asia projects support the development of infrastructure to improve distribution, use and collection systems for green products. Infrastructure support could include anything from setting up an operating system to locating physical facilities. For example, GIZ, the coordinator of the *WEEE-Recycle* project, consulted their contacts in the manufacturing industry in an effort to develop a collection mechanism. GIZ has proposed that NGOs could be licensed to collect waste and establish collection bins. Such expert advice is valuable when new infrastructure is needed at the point-of-sale, use and/or end-of-life phases.



### CHOICE EDITING

While above mentioned strategies deal with pushing green and fair products and services to the market, choice editing deals with pushing harmful or undesirable products and services away from the market. This approach of curtailing or even completely banning can take four different forms: a) Banning or restricting availability of products or service such as the “Ban the Bulb”

initiative of the Australian Government which called for replacement of all incandescent bulbs by CFLs and LEDs; b) Choice editing on the basis of a component of a product such as the ban or restriction in the use of paints which contain lead; c) Choice editing on the basis of the manufacturing process such as pushing out of mercury cells in the manufacture of Caustic Soda/Chlorine; c) Politics and ideology may also dictate restriction or denial of choice, and d) Choice editing within supply chains such as ‘blood diamonds’<sup>11</sup>.

The *Lead Elimination Project* practices choice editing on the level of product component. The project aims at eliminating lead decorative paints in the markets of seven participating countries including Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia. An Asian certification program ensuring no added lead in household paints will help the impact of the project last much longer than the project lifetime. This effort starts with training the Project Partners in e.g. development of certification standards, organizational structures and governance. The Partners will then engage stakeholders in dialogue to develop a set-up and terms of reference of the certification. Ideally, one certification can be developed for the whole project region and the program will be designed to be self-sustaining based on fees paid by participating paint manufacturers.



11) Akenji, Lewis et.al. (2012). Sustainable Consumption and Production: A handbook for Policy Makers: SWITCH-Asia Policy Support Component, UNEP. <http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-learn/scp-handbook-for-policy-makers.html>

## CO-CREATION

A very innovative way of simultaneously creating both ‘push’ and ‘pull’ for sustainable products and services is the co-creation approach i.e. active collaboration between consumer groups and small and medium enterprises (see Figure 14). The aim of co-creation is to enhance organisational knowledge processes by involving the customer in the creation of meaning and value. A common example is the ‘Nike’ approach, which involves customers in dialogue both individually or as part of thematic communities, generates ideas from consumers about product improvements, and includes co-design and customisation of shoes<sup>12</sup>.

The SWITCH-Asia project *Get Green* runs co-creation processes with the aim of ensuring a stronger position for the product portfolio of the small and medium enterprises and a greater offering of sustainable products for the consumers. At the beginning of 2013, a successful testing of initial participatory and co-design approaches in middle class income target group was done. In the project the change agents and local small and medium enterprises will be connected to each other in co-creation sessions. The outcomes of these sessions will be better understanding of both parties of one and another. On the one hand, this will enable the enterprises to create better-adapted products to the need of the consumer and on the other hand, the consumer will



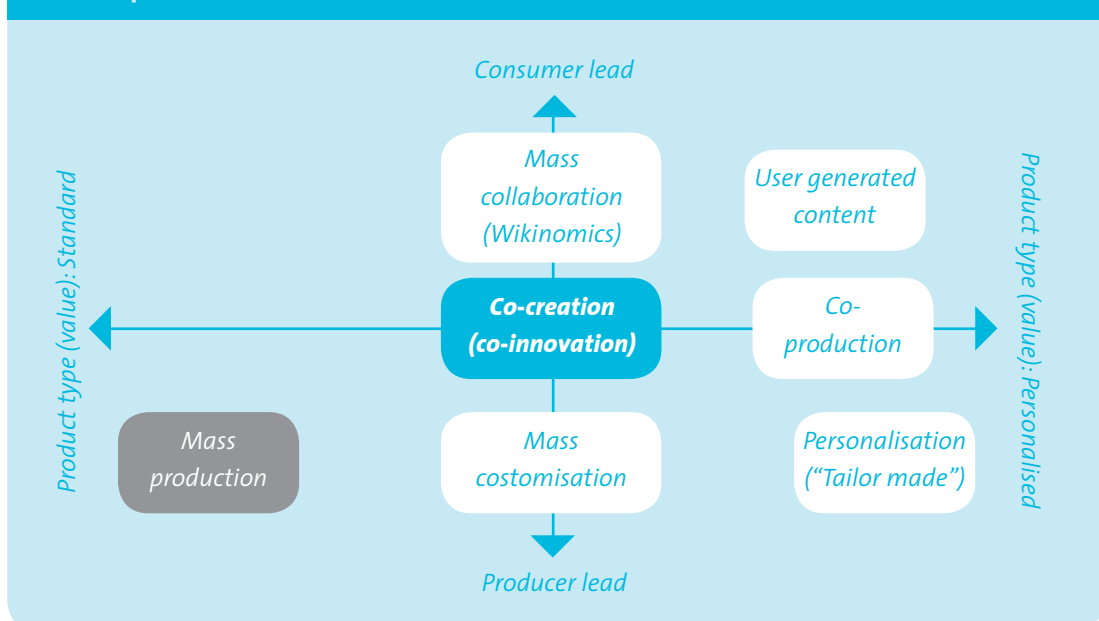
### WHAT IS CO-CREATION?

*Co-creation is an act of collective creativity shared by 2 or more parties. It is a fairly new form of involving the customer in the company and sharing ideas between customer and company. It comes from the earlier known field of participatory design where the user is a partner. Co-creation goes one step further and applies collective creativity to the whole span of a design process.*



be more likely to buy these products because of a deeper understanding of the product and company. A web-based interaction tool (Social Media Interaction Platform) will be produced for the consumers and change agents as well as a

**FIGURE 14: THE CO-CREATION MATRIX**





platform for co-creation and co-design of sustainable products with local small and medium enterprises. This web-based tool, the physical meetings and the establishment of a network will contribute to the community building of *Get Green* that is an important part of the project.

the project builds capacities in local consumer associations (municipal consumer associations and municipal district consumer associations) via a train-the-trainer course and sustainable consumption toolkits developed by this action. The consumer associations have committed to educate consumers and retail companies on good SC practices. Secondly, the consumer associations also collaborate with retailers to reach out to consumers. Beijing Consumer Association has signed 10 MoUs with retailers in Beijing and Tianjin Consumer Association has also signed 10 MoUs with retailers in Tianjin. For measuring performance of the target retailers in contributing to SC, an indicator entitled Green Supply Index (GSI) is applied. GSI is defined as percentage of expenditures of procuring green products sharing in total expenditures of procurement. Monitoring of the MoU implementation will be done by local consumer association, with the support of two universities of NKU and BUCEA. In collaboration with consumer associations, collaborating retailers will disseminate and communicate green product information. The retailers are motivated to get engaged in the project due to potential to access new markets, enhance their image and reputation, the competition with overseas retailers and the general trend for more quality. Thirdly, in Tianjin, TJCA and NKU jointly established Tianjin Green Consumption School, which will play a crucial role in communications

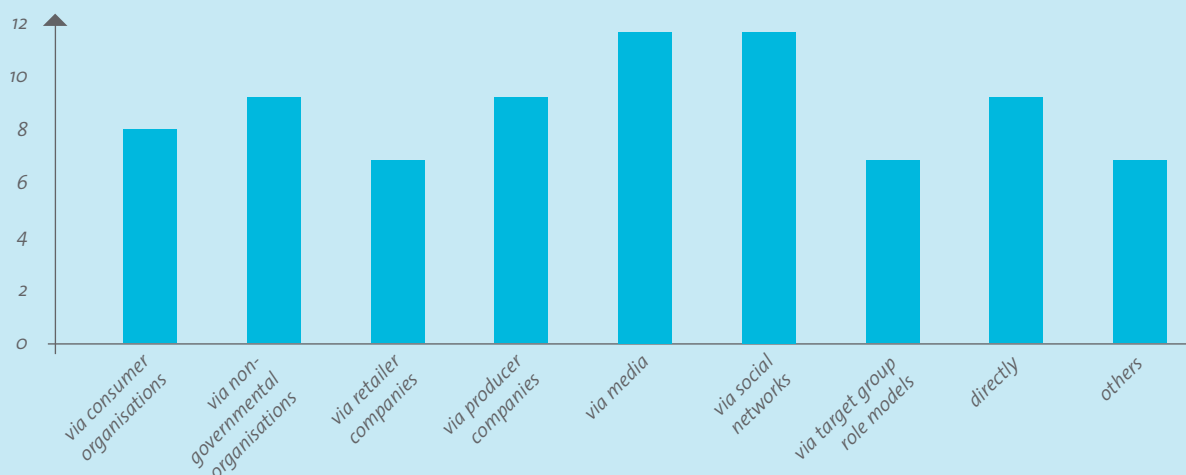
## 4.4 ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES FOR REACHING OUT TO CONSUMERS

Effective reaching out to millions and billions of consumers is a real challenge for the projects. Instead of directly addressing them or individually getting in contact with them, many projects partner with intermediary organisations that are continuously in touch with consumer groups.

In response to the survey, the SWITCH-Asia projects said that they used a variety of channels ranging from consumer organisations, NGOs, retailers, producers to media, social networks and role models. Media and social networks seemed to be the most frequently used channels.

SWITCH-Asia projects make a combination of these channels for the most effective outreach. For example, the project *SC in Urban China* works with three intermediaries including consumer organisations, retailers and universities. Firstly,

FIGURE 15: USAGE DENSITY OF ESSENTIAL CHANNELS THAT ARE USED FOR REACHING OUT TO INDIVIDUAL CONSUMERS



18 projects answered this question.



on sustainable consumption. In Beijing, BUCEA and BJCA jointly established Community Green Consumption Schools in co-operations with district consumer associations. Those community green consumption schools are implementing various training courses and workshops for the purposes of improving public SC awareness and educating citizens in identifying green products and calculating carbon footprint of products.

In the case of the *Get Green* project, capacity is built among the consumer organisations for convincing and supporting consumers to make more environmentally friendly choices. The *Get-Green Guidebook* is used in their trainings. In addition, the project uses social media to replicate this impact.



**TABLE 6: 'PULL' TOOLS VERSUS 'PUSH' TOOLS: ORCHESTRATING TOOLS FROM BOTH CATEGORIES IS ESSENTIAL FOR BEHAVIOUR CHANGE**

PROJECT	← ● 'PULL' STRATEGIES & TOOLS	● → 'PUSH' STRATEGIES & TOOLS
<b>Target ...</b>	Consumers groups	Producers, suppliers and retailers
<b>Aim at ...</b>	Tackling barriers that might have locked the consumer power and could again set that power free to create demand for ethical products	Convincing and enabling producers and retailers to put 'sustainable products and services' in the market
<b>Involve cooperation with ...</b>	NGOs Consumer associations Advertising agencies Retailers Suppliers and producers Media and social networks Schools and universities	Governments Marketing agencies Designers
<b>Include ...</b>	Tools for raising awareness Tools for visibility and transparency Tools for accessibility Experiential tools Procurement support tools	Improving marketing skills Making market links Stimulating green product development Catalyzing product innovation Facilitating infrastructure development

# 4.5 POLICIES THAT SUPPORT PUSH AND PULL STRATEGIES

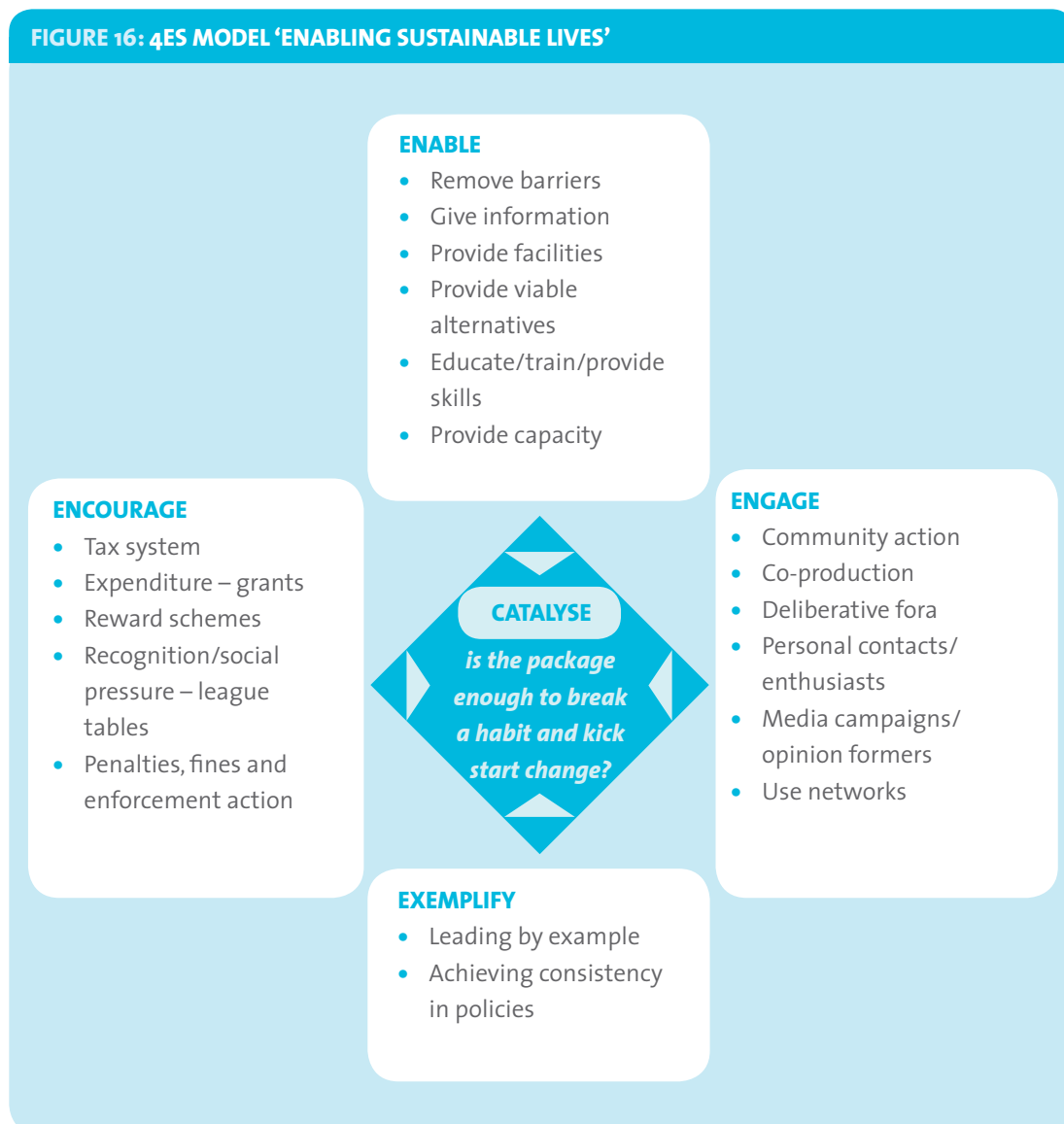
A frequently mentioned model to promote sustainable consumption is for governments to utilise the broad package of tools presented by the 4Es model<sup>13</sup> of behaviour change of engaging, exemplifying, enabling and encouraging introduced by the UK Sustainable Development Commission (see Figure 16).

Scanning the policy engagement of SWITCH-Asia projects towards sustainable consumption from the perspective of this 4Es model, most of the efforts concentrate around ‘enable’, ‘encourage’ and ‘exemplify’ roles of the government while only a few indicate at the role of government to ‘engage’.

A handful of projects engage with policy-makers in order to indicate that policy has a role to ‘enable’ environment friendly behaviour by giving information, education and providing facilities. For example, in the *Pro-Sustain* project work on policy got underway with the display of fair trade products at various Government platforms and exhibitions, especially in New Delhi and Mumbai. Although there is still no public policy to foster the fair trade market in India, good contact has been made with the Development Commissioner for Handlooms and Handicrafts at the Ministry of Commerce, the Minister for Environment at Ministry of Environment and Forests, and the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts at the Ministry of Textiles,

The *Adopt CSR* project, in Vietnam, has been using a similar approach but with advocacy

FIGURE 16: 4ES MODEL ‘ENABLING SUSTAINABLE LIVES’



13) Defra’s 4E’s model was developed as part of Defra’s 2008 Framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours.

campaigns. The project hosted a corporate social responsibility (CSR) forum in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh focusing on consumer protection. Discussions covered the recent Law on Consumer Protection and whether it had improved the situation. In November 2010, Vietnam's National Assembly passed the new consumer protection law which strengthens consumers' rights, including those on the use, collection, and transfer of consumer information. The law obliges manufacturers and sellers to deliver clear information about their products or services, including third party responsibility for the provision of information about products. Nguyen Phuong Nam, Deputy Director General at the Vietnam Competition Authority (VCA) said at the forum in Ho Chi Minh City that the job of safeguarding consumers was not being performed efficiently, and agencies at various levels were not cooperating. For Nguyen Phuong Nam there were two success factors for consumer protection: the involvement of social organisations; and, efficient official machinery from the centre to grassroots levels. He highlighted the fact that guaranteeing consumers' rights would help to improve social welfare.

The case of *WEEE-Recycle* project tries to demonstrate that the government can both 'encourage' and 'enable' sustainable consumption. Knowing that a strong regulatory framework motivates consumers to act, project coordinator GIZ systematically engaged with the Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF) to work on the formulation of a separate legislation for e-waste: the E-Waste (Management and Handling) Rules were finally announced by MoEF in May 2011. The new law addresses all stakeholders, their roles and responsibilities, for the safe collection and disposal of e-waste. The project prepared guidelines to help the e-waste rules be implemented effectively in India. At state level, the project engages with the government pollution control boards, which are instrumental in implementing most legal and policy mechanisms. In addition, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs (MoCA) supports the project, particularly because of its awareness-raising campaign using electronic media. A toolkit is planned with the Department of Information Technology of the Government of India, for the eco-design of electronic products.

*Lead Elimination* project enters into a dialogue with government officials that they should encourage sustainable consumption. Policy dialogues should lead to effective national policy instruments to prohibit or control the manufacture and sale of lead based paints.

*SPIN-VCL* project also makes an effort to explore the role of government to 'encourage' purchase and use of sustainable products in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. The background studies completed in the first half of 2013 focus on specific policy elements such as fiscal policies and procurement policies that might facilitate the promotion of sustainable products. UNEP has conducted a Sustainable Product Policy workshops in each of the three countries with the participation of government institutions on the implementation of policy instruments proposed in the policy study. UNEP will further assist the development of a draft national action plans on policy measures for sustainable product development that will be presented and discussed during the National Working Conferences on Sustainable Product Policy, end of 2013.

An in-depth discussion on how the SWITCH-Asia projects are linking with policy-makers is given in the study from the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility accessible at <http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-learn/scaling-up-scp-via-linking-to-policy-makers.html>

# 5

## LESSONS LEARNED FOR SCALING-UP SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION



**W**hen ‘push’ and ‘pull’ strategies are being put into place, several key factors can help secure an impact on the ground. Outlined below are some of the useful lessons learned by SWITCH-Asia projects, which can be taken to help improve future strategies and tools.

### **Strike the balance between ‘push’ and ‘pull’**

To see a change in the behaviour of consumers, it is not sufficient to just inform them and make them curious about features of green and/or fair trade products. At the same time projects need to work on the supply of ethical products. Only a balanced mix of tools, which address both supply and demand of a product, will be successful. With a market survey covering all actors in the supply chain, with tools and standards addressing manufactures and end-users, and a moderate development process, the Higher Efficiency Transformer project provides an example for balanced ‘push’ and ‘pull’ strategies.

### **Study consumer segments carefully**

The SWITCH-Asia projects which deliberately analysed the characteristics and needs of the target consumer groups were much more effective in gaining acceptability for their range of ethical products. For this, marketing knowledge and working with designers was important.

The projects reflected on whether they had carefully thought through whom exactly they were targeting or whether they had made the right choice concerning the target consumer segments. There was also a question as to whether targeting niche markets is a good idea when mainstreaming ethical consumption is in fact SWITCH-Asia’s core objective. Targeting the consumer segments that could achieve a considerable difference with their purchasing power and using the distribution channels that could

enable accessibility to these segments could be more effective for scaling-up ethical consumption. At the stage of strategy design, large retailer and distributor companies, who are also targeting these consumer segments, could be engaged.

### **Deliver one consistent message**

In order to have effective awareness-raising campaigns and product accessibility, the delivery of consistent and clear messages to the target consumers is important. In the case of the *Pro-Sustain* project, in order to prevent many small organisations sending a variety of messages, project partners are coordinating their communication strategies, synchronising media outreach, public events, in-store promotions and internet outreach. Fair Trade Forum-India (FTF-I), as a national network, including International Resources for Fairer Trade (IRFT), and Shop for Change (SFC), will continue the common messaging launched by the project after EU funding has finished. The short films for cinema, the internet and social media, and the celebrity endorsements will also continue.

The *SusTex* project had a similar experience during its out-reach at trade fairs or whilst communicating with buyers: the SME strategy rested on a collective, single, strong story on the environmental friendliness and health and safety improvements they were taking up at the eco-park.

### **Identify the most effective entry point**

Regardless of the private consumer segments targeted and the country of focus, the projects often took health and safety promotion as a component of the broader rubric of ethical consumption. Health issues have been an entry point for consumers into larger debates about consumption. For example, the *SUS-BIRD* project is reducing the environmental impact of building interior renovation and decoration (BIRD) practices and production and it observed that most buyers only realise the danger of non-sustainable decoration when it is too late, e.g. when their children get sick while living in a room with poor air qual-

ity. For this, the project disseminates information about the potential harm of non-sustainable products to the target groups. Health and safety is a strong incentive for consumers to pay more attention to, and accept the cost of, sustainable products.

### **Build a package to disseminate standards**

Having mandatory and voluntary product performance standards provides effective ways to limit damages from products when they are used. In terms of changing consumption patterns, these tools are the most direct policy instruments for eliminating low-performing choices from the market. However, development of the standards alone is not sufficient to shift purchasing behaviour. For disseminating the standards, awareness raising-activities and supporting tools such as eco-design guidelines, and facilitation of supplier match-making with retailers would be necessary. The *Pro-Sustain* project in India, and *Electric Motors* in China have developed such packages to promote their respective product standards.

### **Make life-time costs visible**

High price is commonly mentioned as a barrier for shifting to green products. In order to overcome this challenge, consumer groups should be encouraged to think beyond the purchasing price and be made aware of further costs that could be incurred during the use of the product, or the indirect costs they might be subject to based on the negative impacts on health and safety. Similarly, reasons behind the high price of sustainable products should be demonstrated in a language that could be well understood by the target consumer segments. For this, SWITCH-Asia projects find visuals and total cost calculation tools effective (such as the ‘total cost owning tool’ by the *China Higher Efficiency Transformers* project).

### **Engage before, during and after purchase**

Setting up strategies to accompany customers during their journey with products and could help to drive behaviour change. This has been the learning of the *SPIN-VCL* Project in Vietnam based on the ‘Brand Touch Points’ that they applied. They simply follow the customer in all places and times where the new brand can ‘touch’ them i.e. during their pre-purchase experience, purchase experience and post-purchase experience.



### **Reckon promising sectors**

A lesson learned within the still-young *Get-Green* Project is that some sectors such as food and drink, home care for children and fast moving consumer goods could offer effective entry points for immediate behaviour shifts. Sectors that are heavily dependent on infrastructure modifications such as mobility and transport might not be suitable for encouraging individual behaviour shift in the short term.

### **Back-up with access to finance**

Availability of finance could catalyse the ‘push’ strategies to work effectively. As ‘push’ strategies, such as putting a marketing strategy in place or meeting suppliers at trade fairs, might not be budgeted in SCP projects, including a financing component in the project design could energise them. The chamber of commerce in the Green Products and Labelling project found that in order to motivate its member SMEs to enter the Green Product Challenge they needed to offer a strong package of specific training, and above all, financial means (or at least incentives).

### **Seek ownership by implementing policy-makers**

Ensuring clear support from the national and/or local governmental agencies for ‘push’ and ‘pull’ strategies seems to be crucial. This is particularly important for long-term sustainability of ‘push’ strategies if such bodies have an implementing role. In the case of the Green Products and Labelling project, for example, the involvement of ministry staff was initially ad-hoc or limited to responding to specific requests from the coordinating partner. This hampered work on eco-labelling standards and in a way left the ‘pull’ strategies, such as awareness-raising efforts targeting private consumers, less effective. In the *China Higher Efficiency of Transformers* project, aligning project activities like developing energy performance and eco-design standards with the national climate change target and energy conservation plans increased its acceptability.



# 6

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study investigated how SWITCH-Asia projects engage with consumers, including individual, public and corporate, for achieving sustainable consumption. The conclusions regarding the SWITCH-Asia experience can be found equally relevant for the community working towards a similar vision of scaling-up SCP practices.

### 6 important issues for leveraging consumer power

In order to effectively leverage the power of consumers, several issues are important to pay attention from the early stages of project development:

**1** Firstly, a clear understanding of the characteristics of target groups and market segments is essential. Analysis and deeper understanding of demographics, product use patterns, behaviour, lifestyle format can provide guidance for choosing the right package of tools and intervention strategies. Grasping what motivates and hinders sustainability behaviour among the target group can be part of this analysis. Common motivators among individual consumer segments seem to be health and safety concerns, convenience and comfort, and major life events such as the arrival of a baby where it changes a general attitude towards life. This should affect project partnerships and organisations with relevant experience (such as sociology, psychology) that can be brought on board. Additionally, sustainability messages need to be customised according to the characteristics of the particular market segments.

**2** Secondly, there is no one single 'golden' strategy for engagement. A combination of 'pull' and 'push' strategies needs to be considered. On the one hand, the 'pull' strat-

egies can directly target consumers and work on removing the barriers such as lack of awareness for unlocking environment friendly consumer behaviour. On the other hand, the 'push' strategies can target producers, suppliers and retailers and work more on creating the facilitating conditions such as making environment friendly products and services more accessible.

**3** Thirdly, for efficient consumption and improving life-cycle performance of products and services, it is required to work on all consumer decision-making stages including purchase, use and discard (end-of-life) is required. So pull and push strategies need to span all these different decision-points touching consumers. Till now, the SWITCH-Asia projects have been rarely putting emphasis on after-sales and end-of-life stages of a product or service. A more balanced approach to all consumer decision-making stages might give rise to longer, boarder impact.

**4** Fourthly, when devising strategies to address individual consumers, it'd be essential not to fall into the trap that just informing consumers will make them switch from environmentally harmful behaviour. In the SWITCH-Asia Programme, heavy emphasis seems to be put on awareness-raising tools relying on information campaigns, and visibility tools on eco-labelling schemes. No emphasis was put on incentive schemes, such as on the use of peer pressure, or lower taxation for green products. This perspective reflects the assumption that private households have a rational decision-making process (rational choice theory<sup>14</sup>). Many recent sustainable consumption studies indicate a limited success for conventional information-based instruments for changing behaviour and scaling-up of green consumption<sup>15</sup>. They mention that

14) See for example Jackson, T. (2005). Motivating Sustainable Consumption – A review of evidence on consumer behaviour and behavioural change. A report to the Sustainable Development Research Network. Available online at [www.sd-research.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/motivatingfinal\\_000.pdf](http://www.sd-research.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/motivatingfinal_000.pdf)

15) See for example DEFRA. (2008). A Framework for Pro-Environmental Behaviours. Available online at [www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13574-behaviours-report-080110.pdf](http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13574-behaviours-report-080110.pdf)

more attention needs to be paid to the underlying structure of both behaviour and motivations. The SWITCH-Asia community should benefit from these lessons learned. Future SWITCH-Asia projects might be more effective in scaling-up SCP if they use more robust tools to analyse and address habits, social factors, infrastructure and other influences on decision-making.

**5** Fifthly, the project development and implementation should pay attention to right type of monitoring and evaluation of consumer behaviour change. This study noted an essential missing element in the impact assessment of ‘push’ and ‘pull’ instruments on consumer behaviour. Project logical frameworks make reference to the number of awareness-raising campaigns, or to marketing skills and capacity-building workshops delivered, but there were no indicators for how these might affect the behaviour of the target consumer groups. This study, therefore, presents a snap shot of project experiences but cannot draw definitive conclusions regarding the most appropriate strategies for significantly changing consumer behaviour. For any development programme to be able to report on consumer behaviour impact, more robust sustainable consumption indicators need to be in place.

**6** Sixthly, the catalysing effect of a policy framework for widespread change should not be forgotten. Consumers and producers cannot ensure a switch just on their own; they need facilitators to set the enabling conditions. Few projects tapped into the opportunity of setting-up a supportive policy framework. In the future, more support from the policy-makers could be sought for making both ‘push’ and ‘pull’ strategies more effective.

#### **Potential in unexplored drivers**

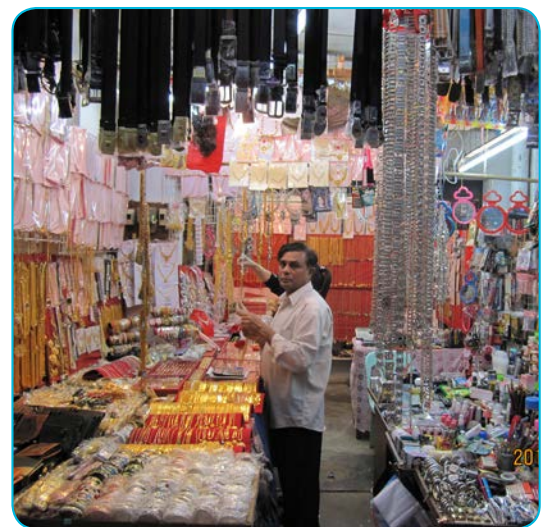
There remain several other leverage points to be explored for scaling-up sustainable consumption in Asia:

- Tapping into Asian culture for, for example, saving, using natural materials in everyday life. Unfortunately, the trend has been for the link to natural materials like bamboo to grow weaker, and western inventions to be considered ‘modern’. The perception of what is modern needs to be challenged.
- Working with low-income consumers, a market segment often referred to as the ‘bottom of the economic pyramid’. Creating and replicating innovative solutions that are both sustainable and affordable for low-



income consumers remains another largely untapped sustainable consumption opportunity. Projects could foster the use of resources available in the community, making it easy to assemble and maintain, allowing for feed back and reinvention, and using local labour as much as possible, would lead to resource efficient and affordable solutions for the poor.

- A big leverage area for achieving resource efficient consumption is to move beyond creating demand for green products and to promote values that are less materialistic and favour conspicuous consumption less. This thinking would lead to project interventions at a preventive level and go beyond incremental modifications of the production processes and the products that are consumed. It requires asking questions like; what level and what type of consumption do people really need to live a good and fulfilling life?





## FURTHER READING

This study “Towards sustainable consumption: Strategies and lessons learnt from the SWITCH-Asia Programme” is one of the five scaling-up studies. The publication and dossier can be seen at this link:

<http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-learn/scaling-up-via-motivating-consumers-for-ethical-consumption.html>

The video “Asian Consumers: How to get engaged for sustainable consumption?” was produced with a joint effort among the SWITCH-Asia Pro-Sustain and SPIN-VCL project partners, several members of the Consumers International, Ogilvy Earth and the SWITCH-Asia Network Facility. The partners collected sound bites and made interviews in Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and China to convey the stories of major Asian household consumer segments. It elaborates on their motivators and barriers for ethical consumption. The video starts with few consumption facts, continues with an introduction to personas/ interviewees from various income groups and delivers barriers and motivators one by one. At the end there is a list of suggestions for actors to take action. It can be watched at this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5efdxztwPgE&feature=youtu.be> and at this link: [http://v.youku.com/v\\_show/id\\_XNDcoNzMwMTEy.html](http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNDcoNzMwMTEy.html)

The SWITCH-Asia booklet “Mainstreaming Sustainable Consumption” was prepared in collaboration with Consumers International, to provide an overview of the consumption trends in Asia. It presents the challenges that consumers face in the region when embracing sustainable consumption, particularly regarding the product life cycle. The booklet sums up solutions through the presentation of programmes and project case studies from the region. It can be accessed at this link: <http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-learn/sustainable-consumption-in-asia.html>

Workshops at the Asia-Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production (APRSCP) in Yogyakarta (November, 2011) gathered insights into the decision-making behaviour of urban middle-class consumers, low-income people, public procurers and corporate purchasers. Important factors motivating and preventing middle-class consumers from purchasing and consuming sustainably were synthesised visually. The workshop summary can be found at this link: <http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-info/events/switch-asia-at-aprscp-2011/mainstreaming-sustainable-consumption-part-1.html>

SCP Handbook for Policy Makers was developed at the request of governments in the Regional PSC in 2012. It contains chapters directly relevant to Sustainable Consumption, including one on sustainable lifestyles. This handbook was used to train over 100 policy makers and stakeholders in the region in 2012. The handbook is available at this link: [http://www.switch-asia.eu/fileadmin/content/PSC/Publication/SCP-Manual\\_low-resolution\\_.pdf](http://www.switch-asia.eu/fileadmin/content/PSC/Publication/SCP-Manual_low-resolution_.pdf)

Under the SWITCH-Asia Regional Policy Support Component, UNEP, the Nepalese Government and the Asia Pacific Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption and Production convened a two-day workshop focusing on sustainable consumption policies in the region. As a platform for dialogue, participants, mainly policy makers and practitioners, discussed the progress of mainstreaming sustainable consumption policies and tools in economic and development policies and poverty alleviation strategies in their countries. The workshop explored current and more progressive options available to steer consumption towards development that enables communities to aspire for a better life with shared social responsibility and environmental stewardship. A resource pack was co-authored by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies and UNEP and served as a background paper for the workshop. All workshop materials are available at this link: <http://www.switch-asia.eu/switch-policy/news/kathmandu.html>