



Consumers International

THE GLOBAL VOICE FOR CONSUMERS

2003

ANNUAL REPORT
RAPPORT D'ACTIVITÉ/INFORME ANUAL





2003 Annual Report

CI members celebrate World Consumer Rights Day 2003 in (clockwise from centre): Seychelles, Nepal, Fiji, Chile, India, Kiribati



Marilena Lazzarini
President

The consumer movement has thrived because people across geographical, cultural, ethnic, religious and economic divides have a common interest in social justice and access to the basic requirements for a dignified life. Consumers International (CI) is a symbol of this solidarity, bringing together a global partnership of national organisations from some 115 countries, based in the common purpose of empowering ordinary people to exercise their rights and responsibilities, and of collective action to protect their interests in international policy-making.

The need for collective international action was recognised by consumer leaders more than 40 years ago when CI was founded, but the imperative has become more urgent since the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection confirmed the universal relevance of consumer rights in 1985. The end of the Cold War, the spread of market economies to unprepared citizens facing economic hardship, the expansion of multinational corporations, the creation of the World Trade Organization, the curtailing of national economic sovereignty and growing threats to international economic and social stability have deepened the challenges.

This Annual Report 2003 illustrates two contrasting aspects of the consumer movement's response to inequality and uncertainty around the globe. One of the year's highlights was CI's 17th World Congress, the triennial gathering of member organisations and guests to debate the issues consumers face locally and internationally. We updated and expanded our statement of policy, confirming that the common interests of consumers cross all social and political boundaries. As always, the nearly 600 delegates illustrated both the strength and diversity of the worldwide consumer movement and its passionate commitment to making life better – especially for the disadvantaged in all communities.

This Report also describes the highlights of CI's work in 2003 in programmes supporting development of members' expertise and resources, especially in the area of international representation. More than ever, the consumer movement relies on research as a basis of its policies and as a source of empowerment for individuals and communities to take action on their own behalf.

At the World Congress, CI members elected a new Council to lead the organisation through to 2006. CI's work in recent years has been more wide-ranging in subject and location than ever before. We celebrate this. But the challenge for the new Council is to ensure that the consumer movement is equipped to increase its influence on decision-takers and policy-makers. This means encouraging new ways of thinking and making tough decisions about priorities. The new Council contains a good cross-section of CI's total membership and I look forward to our work together in planning for the future.

Three long-serving Council members retired at the Congress – Jayen Chellum of Mauritius, one of the first activists from Africa to contribute to the global movement; Anne-Lore Kohne of Germany, whose organisation played a leading part in introducing consumer policy to Eastern Europe; and Dr Song Vo Kyung of Korea, a former CI Treasurer and Vice President. On behalf of all CI members, my thanks to them for their outstanding contributions.

I am particularly grateful to Louise Sylvan, my predecessor as President, for her intellectual and political leadership over the past three years. We are sorry to lose her from CI but proud that she will be fighting the consumer cause at a high level within the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "M Lazzarini". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

In representing Consumers International (CI) to funders and at international institutions, I still come across people who think that the consumer movement is only about giving well-off people advice about how to choose their next car. The work of CI and its member organisations described in this Annual Report shows clearly that this is not the case.

Comparative buying advice allows individual consumers to reject shoddy and overpriced goods and services. Getting best value matters most to those who have very little.

But it is the first of the eight consumer rights – access to the means of meeting basic needs – that takes a central place in our work. Consumption is a necessity, but for one-third of the world's population, the idea of choice is a remote dream. Essential services – clean water, sewerage, health care, safe food, electricity – are for them the urgent consumer issues. Our campaigning illustrates the importance given to these issues through practical local action and promoting pro-poor policies at the international level. Examples in 2003 included:

- A project to extend the water supply in a poor suburb of Nairobi
- The start of a cooperative consumer buying club in Zimbabwe
- Work on the safety of street food in 14 countries in Asia and Africa
- National and international action on intellectual property regimes to make affordable medicines available in poorer countries and to protect farmers' rights to seeds
- Promoting pro-development policies in World Trade Organization negotiations – particularly the need to stop the huge European and US agricultural subsidies which help keep poor countries and farmers poor
- Support for consumer groups in Central America in monitoring, pricing and other access issues for water and electricity.

Getting the basics right for consumers is an essential requirement. But the world moves rapidly onward, especially with the challenges presented by new technologies. In 2003, CI achieved two notable successes. The first was securing an international agreement (in Codex Alimentarius – the UN-based forum which negotiates food standards) about the kind of safety assessments that should be used for genetically modified foods before they are allowed on the market. Secondly, we persuaded the global information technology industry to adopt pro-consumer guidelines for dealing with disputes in electronic commerce transactions.

As a membership organisation, CI is committed to participation in its governance and policy formulation. In October 2003, our 17th World Congress was the occasion for the election of a new President and Council. Marilena Lazzarini became the first President from Latin America in our 43-year history. CI's new Council provides an excellent balance among members and experiences from around the world. The Congress Statement summarises global consumer movement policies on a wide range of social and economic issues.

CI's work is financed by member subscriptions and programme grants. Last year, grant income made up about two-thirds of the total and increased by some 10 percent over 2002. We received support from 19 donor agencies (*listed on page 47*). I record our thanks to them for the resources to carry out our work, and for their recognition of the importance of the consumer movement as an agent for social change.

Our members' work at the national level is the powerhouse for taking forward consumer rights. Without their contribution of time and expertise to international action, CI's work would be greatly reduced.

Finally, my personal thanks for their support to Louise Sylvan, CI President from 2000 to 2003, to the other Council members whose terms of office ended in 2003, and to CI's staff for their professionalism and commitment.



*Julian Edwards
Director General*

Julian Edwards



17th World Congress The Future of Consumer Protection

The Future of Consumer Protection

The most important event for Consumers International during 2003 was its World Congress, held in October in Lisbon.

World Congress is the triennial forum where the General Assembly adopts CI's main policy statement and elects its governing Council, including the President.

But equally important is the role the World Congress plays in reaffirming commitment to collective action by CI and its members to make markets work for people.

As expressed by Jorge Sampaio, President of the Portuguese Republic and keynote speaker: "Who better than the organised consumer can act against threats that harm human rights and health?"

This 17th World Congress, entitled "The Future of Consumer Protection: Representation, Regulation and Empowerment in a World Economy," gathered 600 delegates from 110 countries. Organised with the Portuguese Association for Consumer Protection (DECO), the five-day event offered plenary sessions, delegate-led meetings, training sessions and 15 workshops on food, trade, intellectual property rights, corporate social responsibility, utilities, standards, competition law and a wide range of implementation issues.

Outgoing CI President Louise Sylvan handed over leadership to Marilena Lazzarini, executive coordinator of IDEC, Brazil, and the first Latin American to lead CI. The 19 other new Council members represent members from Australia, Belgium, China (Hong Kong), Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Kenya, Korea, Malaysia, Mali, Netherlands, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States and Zimbabwe.

Most issues discussed at Congress – globalisation, sustainability, inequality – were not new. What was new was the consensus that, in Sylvan's words: "In the three years since the last Congress, the global market has become stronger. Today our demands are stronger and governments listen more.

"Who better than the organised consumer can prevent or quickly correct practices that harm the health and safety of citizens?"

– Keynote speaker
Jorge Sampaio
President of Portugal



Globalisation, sustainability, inequality: What can consumers do?



New CI President Marilena Lazzarini (left) and Louise Sylvan, outgoing President

Our challenge is to consider what market economies can do for consumers, and what they cannot do, and what governments and consumer organisations must do to provide the necessary countervailing power."

This theme – the limitations and advantages of markets – provided a broad framework to discuss the international consumer agenda: the impacts of liberalisation and global trade rules on consumers; global decision-making and citizen participation; safety of new technologies; growth of cross-border retailing and electronic commerce; the search for more sustainable economies and what this means for producers and consumers in developed and developing economies; consumer policy as a tool for development and the fight against poverty.

But delegates come to Congress with a briefcase full of local concerns, as well. (See *Voices from World Congress*, page 14) It is a measure of the events' success that they go home with practical approaches and renewed motivation to resolve the everyday problems of the people they represent.



New CI Council

Patron of CI



Rhoda Karpatkin

This honour was bestowed on Rhoda Karpatkin, President Emeritus of Consumers Union (US) and former President of CI (1984-1990). The 2003 Rhoda Karpatkin Advocate award supported CI's Hemispheric Consumer Task Force in its campaign to influence FTAA free trade negotiations in the Americas.

"I believe that the values our movement holds dear cannot be fully achieved for consumers in one country unless they are achieved for consumers everywhere in the world."

For more information, see:
www.consumersinternational.org/congress2003

Voices from World Congress

Delegates pinpoint the top consumer protection issues back home.

“**The impact of globalisation** is critical for small island states like Fiji. With the WTO, we face losing our trade preferences for sugar, our main export.”

–*Matasasi Labati, Consumer Council of Fiji*

“**Dissemination of consumer information** is the biggest consumer protection issue in a country as vast and diverse as India.”

–*Sri Ram Khanna, VOICE, India*

“**Energy**: how do we ensure that it is renewable, efficient and affordable?”

–*María Rodríguez Sánchez
Confederación de Consumidores y Usuarios, Spain*

“**Privatisation of public services** – consumers can lose out badly.”

–*Indrani Thuraisingham
Federation of Malaysian Consumer Associations*

“**The European Union**. Although Norway is not a EU member, developments there affect us directly.”

–*Terje Sorenson, Norwegian Consumer Council*

“We have problems with **public utilities** and **medical care**. **Financial services** are also a big consumer problem.”

–*Nadezda Zamorenova, KonfOp, Russia*

“There are so many consumer problems but right now we are most worried about **political instability**. Even as we talk, Bolivia is in the midst of upheaval.”

–*Isabel R de Deheza
Servicio de Educación y Defensa del Consumidor
(SEDECO), Bolivia*

“We have no **consumer protection legislation**, so we have no framework for claims or compensation.”

–*Zouhair Berro, Consumers Lebanon*

“I have been inspired by the Congress resolutions on **breast-feeding**, **tobacco control** and **health and nutrition**.”

–*Joyce Campbell, National Consumers League, Jamaica*



Representation and Regulation in the World Economy

International Representation

Consumers International strives to put consumer rights and social justice at the centre of the international development agenda. CI's approach is to push for a multi-stakeholder decision-making process that allows those whose lives are most affected to have an equal say.

Campaigns by CI and its members in 2003 sought to ensure fairness within international trade agreements, eradicate agricultural dumping, make affordable medicines available in poorer countries, promote access to safe water and food, and regulate GMOs. Its international representation activities are based on research and policy development conducted with its members and reflect the day-to-day experiences of consumers around the world.

The world's only global consumer federation, CI has official observer status before the **UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)** and is a recognised NGO at the **World Health Organization, FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, UN Commission on Sustainable Development, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** and the **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)**. CI is equally active where less formal mechanisms for representation exist, as at the **World Trade Organization**, where it demands greater participation by consumers in policy-making.

Regional Priorities

Highlights of regional priorities in 2003 by CI's four offices include:

In the **Americas**: The **Hemispheric Consumer Task Force**, with CI members from Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada and the US, conducted a successful year-long campaign of lobbying, seminars and media work to influence the outcome of **Free Trade Area of the Americas** negotiations. More than 100 citizens' groups signed its Declaration for more equitable

"Global decisions are now being taken that will affect consumers for decades. CI is our only option to influence this future."

—Felix Cohen, *Consumentenbond, Netherlands*

trade practices and respect for consumer rights. FTAA talks ended in a stalemate, attributed, in part, to the "shadow of Cancún", the inconclusive WTO meeting where CI also actively campaigned.

In **Africa**, food security took centre stage, with the regional office playing a global role in **protesting GMOs as a response to hunger**. Research on the impact of US and EU subsidies, including the dramatic plight of **cotton producers in West Africa**, was widely cited by the media. Empowering consumers to engage in utility sector reforms brought practical victories in **access to water**. A survey to track implementation of the consumer protection clause (Article 51) in the **Cotonou Convention** found that consumer organisations are not being consulted.

In **Europe**, consumer protection issues related to the expansion of the **European Union** required attention, especially EU and US farm policy, in conjunction with work being done by the **Trans Atlantic Consumer Dialogue**. Representation activities included meetings with the **OECD Consumer Policy** and **Competition** committees and participation in a roundtable with data protection commissioners and industry. The three-year **Community Fund** institutional development project in food and trade, which ended in 2003, brought skills and visibility to consumer groups in the **Balkans, the Baltic States, Belarus** and **Ukraine**.

In the **Asia Pacific** region, the office expanded its **"No Patents on Life Forms"** on farmers' rights, traditional knowledge and genetic resources to a more comprehensive reassessment of global intellectual property rights regimes and their impacts on trade, food, health and education. Capacity-building on competition policy and consumer protection law in small economies included a commission from UNCTAD to develop a comprehensive training manual for use worldwide.

Work across Regions

The **Trans Atlantic Consumer Dialogue**, hosted by CI, entered its fifth year of EU-US exchange, developing positions on trade, electronic commerce, food and intellectual property rights. Its mid-year meeting included an hour-long session with the European Trade Commissioner. The TACD Intellectual Property group held a conference on the World Intellectual Property Organization at CI's World Congress. See: www.tacd.org/

Diagnostic comparative studies in food safety norms, consumer protection legislation and public utility regulatory systems were produced by the **Euro-Latin American Consumer Dialogue**. Sessions at World Congress and a meeting with EU authorities in Brussels brought the three-year project to a close.

Looking Forward

During 2004, CI will begin these new programmes:

Consumer Rights and the Elimination of Poverty through Global Trade

This two-year programme introduces "watch groups" to monitor developments in food security, agricultural trade; access to services (water, sanitation, energy, utilities, health and education); and pro-consumer competition policies to counter restrictive business practices. Among the participating countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Jordan, Laos, Moldova, Nepal, Panama, Peru, Tajikistan and Vietnam.

Capacity Building in UN Guidelines on Sustainable Consumption

This project promotes implementation of sustainable consumption recommendations in section G of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, reviewing best practices in six European countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden) and building capacity for implementation, through training and stakeholder consultations, in 12 Asian countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam).

CI has also signed a memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Environment Programme to develop a training package on the sustainable consumption section of UN Guidelines.

Emerging User Demands for Sustainable Solutions

Consumer groups in Belgium, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and the UK will map out emerging demands for sustainability by consumers to identify new products and services. Activities will combine research and information dissemination.

Russian Consumers in a Global Market

This training project will help Russian organisations defend consumer interests in WTO negotiations at the national and international level, focusing on agriculture, technical standards and financial services.

Protecting Consumers in E-Commerce Transactions

Consumer protection and confidence in e-commerce is the aim of this project, to be implemented in Malaysia and Thailand. Activities include research, legal analysis and development of a consumer protection framework for e-commerce utilising best practice guidelines developed in conjunction with European expertise.

Consumer Participation in Standards Work

Training, information and testing skills to strengthen participation of consumer organisations in national processes of standardisation is the aim of this two-year project with members from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama, Peru and Canada.

African Debates on GMOs

Meetings, media work and research to empower African consumer organisations and other stakeholders in the debate on GMOs will take place in Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Trade and Economics

Global trade brings opportunities and obstacles to the world's consumers. In its final year, CI's Consumers in the Global Market programme examined the impact of trade liberalisation in agriculture, services and competition, and worked with members to promote pro-development policies.

5th WTO Ministerial Campaign

The highlight of 2003 was CI's global campaign to influence the outcome of the **5th World Trade Organization Ministerial** meeting, held in Cancún in September. CI's delegation of more than 40 consumer associations presented a "shopping list" of demands based on research in 16 countries and set forth in the CI **Consumer Charter for Trade**:

- **Deliver promises** made in WTO Doha (2001) development agenda
- **Market access** for small farmers (no export subsidies, no dumping)
- **Food security** for all (no patents on life forms)
- **Informed choices** (GM labelling)
- **Good health** – and medicines for all (beware TRIPS)
- **Affordable and regulated** services (eg water, electricity)
- **More choice**, no price fixing, better value for consumers

The campaign was launched in April at the WTO Secretariat in Geneva with a presentation of CI's work on competition. Advocacy events over the next six months included a Coordinated Day of Consumer Action by CI members in 10 **Latin American** countries, with 70 consumer and civil society organisations endorsing CI demands; a civil society forum held alongside the **Least Developed Country trade ministers** meeting in Bangladesh and the civil society forum held parallel to the **African Union trade ministers** meeting in Mauritius; a report on the global impact of **EU Common Agricultural Policy** and the damage done to developing countries through agricultural subsidies. Global appeals included lobbying and letter-writing campaigns to governments and WTO ambassadors and CI participation in the first meeting of an informal WTO-NGO consultation group convened by the WTO Director General.

The collapse of the trade talks in Cancún was a disappointment for consumers but the momentum generated along the way strengthened efforts to take the consumer movement agenda forward. Reflection on post-Cancún strategies took place at World Congress, where consumer input into bilateral and regional free trade agreements emerged as priorities, alongside renewed commitment to fight agricultural export subsidies and promote food security, universal access to essential services and pro-consumer competition policies through CI's new programme, Consumer Rights and the Elimination of Poverty through Global Trade, launched in January 2004.



“Through CI, we have established invaluable contacts with international experts in issues like intellectual property rights that can only be dealt with effectively at the international level.”

–Armand De Wasch
Test Achats, Belgium

Regional Trade

CI's Africa office conducted a survey on the impacts of integration on tariff reduction and food markets within the Southern African Development Community. The assessment will be used to develop advocacy tools and recommendations specifically for the SADC region.

Competition Policy

Research conducted by CI in seven developing and transition countries shows that adoption of competition regimes and enforcement mechanisms alone will not enhance consumer welfare. Focus on the demand side of market economies through consumer protection is also needed.

Back-to-back conferences organised by CI and UNCTAD – the **Asian Conference on the Post-Doha WTO Competition Issues** and the **Asian Conference on Consumer Protection, Competition Policy and Law** – explored competition issues in the context of Asian development agendas.

The prospect and potential dangers of a multilateral competition agreement within the WTO was analysed by CI and resources developed to build consumer expertise on **multilateral frameworks for competition policy**. These include a Discussion Paper commissioned from international experts, a handbook on how competition works within markets and a new “Competition For Everyone” website, at: www.ciudadanosaldia.com/ci/

New opportunities in 2003 for representation and lobbying included CI’s participation at the International Competition Network annual meeting of government competition professionals, meetings with the WTO Competition Secretariat, and contacts with UNCTAD’s Competition and Consumer Protection Division.

Global Governance

Launched at World Congress, the **Decision Making in the Global Market** project how three global institutions – the **WTO**, the **ISO** and **Codex Alimentarius** – set the standards which govern trade and the role that consumer organisations play. The two-year project will develop guidelines for better practice based on case studies of CI member experiences at these trade, technical standards and food standards bodies. It will also produce a manual for national participation in standards setting. Its new list-serve connects participating CI members.



2nd Forum for Latin American Government Consumer Protection Agencies, Panama

“CI provides a great opportunity for those of us working on local and national consumer issues to help consumers globally, as well. Working with CI staff and sharing information among members enables us to be more effective advocates in our own country.”

*–Jim Guest
Consumers Union of the US*



Coming together around competition in Asia

Food and Nutrition

Safe food, equitable distribution and the consumer's right to know are the focus of CI's work, with an emphasis on consumer participation in the development of food standards.

CI's global Food and Nutrition Programme, now in its second year, conducts research, capacity-building, advocacy and representation activities, especially at the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the UN-based forum that negotiates food standards.

Biotechnology/GM Foods

Biotechnology – and, in particular, the use of **genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in food production** – is a high-profile consumer issue around the world. Consumer demands for **effective pre-market safety assessments, choice through comprehensive labelling** and **recognisable benefits to consumers** advanced in 2003 when CI helped secure an international agreement at Codex on the **safety assessments** for GM foods before they are allowed on the market. Codex standards play a potentially important role in the settlement of trade disputes before the WTO.

Campaigning by CI's Africa office against distribution of **GM food aid to Southern Africa** encouraged Zambia to reject GMOs on health and environmental grounds. **GMOs will not solve hunger** in Africa – or anywhere – was CI's rallying cry at the Ministerial Conference on Agricultural Science and Technology, held in the United States.

Consumer groups held **protests, press conferences, broadcasts, seminars** and **street fairs** on “**Corporate Control of the Food Chain: The GM Link**”, topic of the annual 15 March **World Consumer Rights Day**.

Regulatory frameworks were a focus of CI's **international comparative study on biotechnology and biosafety legislation**. Lobbying for implementation of the African Union Model Law was conducted at the AU Heads of State Summit.



No to GMOs in Sacramento

“CI's global reputation as a campaigning organisation has provided the political space and legitimacy for members to advocate for consumer protection at the national and global level.”

*–Indrani Thuraisingham
Federation of Malaysian
Consumer Associations*

Food Security

Sufficient food exists to feed the world but poverty and lack of access mean that millions face hunger. The impacts of **global trade, biotechnology** and **patent regimes** on small-scale farming are food security issues that consumers now address.

The “**No Patents on Life Forms**” campaign by CI’s Asia-Pacific office raised awareness of the threat to food security posed by the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and its article 27 (3) b, which requires developing countries to provide patent protection for plant varieties. Inclusion of a demand to establish an **international mechanism to protect genetic resources, traditional knowledge and farmers’ rights** in the Dhaka Declaration of trade ministers from the Least Developed Countries in 2003 was a victory.

CI joined **Gene Campaign** and Greenpeace to present the world’s first “patented farmer,” equipped with a pitch fork, in a protest at the European Patent Office against granting new patents on GM soybeans to corporate giant Monsanto.

The **Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety** of the Biodiversity Convention entered into force in 2003, and CI representatives participated in **training events on national regulatory frameworks and future implementation** in Latin America, Asia and Africa. The Protocol requires labelling of living GMOs in international commerce and informed consent prior to imports.



TRIPS, Farmers Rights and Food Security: The Issues at Stake (see p.45)

Food Safety

CI members conducted research in 2003 on the safety of street foods in 14 countries. The status of regulation was studied in **Cameroon, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal** and **Seychelles** and labelling violations examined in **Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand** and **Vietnam**.

Regional capacity-building workshops on **Food Safety Regulatory Frameworks** were held in the **Dominican Republic** and **Ecuador** and a survey conducted in **Bolivia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama** and **Peru**. CI sits on the Pan American Commission on Food Safety (COPAIA), as do several of its members.

Comparative research on **harmonisation of food safety standards** was a major output of the three-year **Euro-Latin American Consumer Dialogue**, which concluded in 2003 with recommendations for future advocacy.

Meat Industry Clean-Up in Croatia

A project by the Croatian Association for Consumer Protection to improve food hygiene and production methods in small abattoirs was praised as “exceptional” by an external consultant for “its focus on educating private sector producers (which) is unusual in the world of consumer activism.” Implementation “required determination and some courage.” The initial impact to improve standards with 15 meat producers was multiplied when the project received considerable media coverage.

Sustainable Food Consumption/Production

The new global SFPAC list-serve was used to develop CI’s briefing paper and to support campaigning efforts of **European** and **Brazilian members** on regional GMO moratoriums.

CI was invited to join the International Task Force on Harmonization and Equivalence in Organic Agriculture and strengthened alliances in the area of Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development, including links with the International Farming System Association.

The first SFPAC regional training workshop for CI members from Central and Eastern Europe produced national action plans in **Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Russia** and **Ukraine**.

Codex Alimentarius

CI representatives attend all priority meetings related to GMOs, food hygiene and the structure of the Codex system. CI was represented at a WHO workshop on Expert Bodies, addressing the need for **openness and diversity in scientific advisory committees**; at the WHO Executive Board, where it voiced **concerns about sugar industry** efforts to undermine advice on diet; at a Codex Committee on Veterinary Drugs which addressed **antibiotic resistance**; and at a Codex Committee on Food Hygiene workshop on **disease-causing organisms** in food.

CI welcomed the new **FAO/WHO Codex Trust Fund** (launched in 2004) for participation by developing countries, but called upon Codex not to seek food industry support for this initiative, citing concerns over industry pressure.

Consumer Protection Legislation

Consumer protection legislation is the cornerstone of defence of consumer rights. Increasingly, the consumer movement is turning its attention beyond national laws to broader issues of competition policy and harmonisation across regions.

In **Europe**: With 10 countries joining the European Union in 2004, consumer organisations dedicated efforts during 2003 to evaluating measures necessary to meet EU entry, implementation, regulation and harmonisation requirements. CI emphasised the need for radical reform of the Common Agriculture Policy. Capacity-building conducted with CI members in the new EU states – **Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovak Republic and Slovenia** – aims to ensure that consumers receive long-term benefits.

In the **Americas**: The **2nd Forum of Government Consumer Protection Agencies** in Panama City advanced cooperation in compliance and enforcement efforts among officials from **Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Uruguay** and the **USA**. The impact of hemispheric, regional and bilateral free trade agreements was high on the agenda. CI's Santiago office is Technical Secretariat for this 15-member forum, created in 2000.

In the **Caribbean**, 15 nations attended the **5th Caribbean Consumers Conference** in St. Lucia, which looked at globalisation, trade liberalisation and the future of a sub-regional common market. The **Caribbean Consumer Consultative Committee** was created to promote independent consumer groups in the region, a task supported throughout the year by CI's **liaison** office in Trinidad and Tobago.

SARS Scams Alerts

The outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome created a market for products claiming to keep the virus at bay. The **Hong Kong Consumer Council** alerted consumers against dangers of purchasing UV lamps reputed to sterilise the SARS virus but responsible for severe skin and eye injuries.

In **Africa**, the **Malawi** Parliament adopted a new consumer protection law in 2003, and consumer protection is included in **Kenya's** new draft Constitution. A meeting in the city of Bukavu in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo looked at consumer policy in the aftermath of conflict in the Great Lakes region. The meeting, attended by CI staff, its local contact **ACDRI**, and members **ABUCO (Burundi)** and **ASCORWA (Rwanda)**, discussed integration of consumer protection into national constitutions now being drafted and ways to build complaints-handling capacity in national organisations in order to document the need for legislation. Security problems kept non-DRC nationals (including CI) from attending the full meeting.

The government of **South Africa** used the **African Consumer Protection Index** developed by the Africa Office to launch its new Consumer Satisfaction Index on the banking and communications sectors. Results of CI's first annual **Status of Consumer Protection and Quality of**

Life in Africa report were presented to the World Congress and research for the second survey initiated.

In **Asia**, CI helped the **Laotian Ministry of Commerce** launch its Fair Trading Unit, parallel to enactment in 2003 of new consumer protection and anti-monopoly laws. In Bangladesh, 60 activists from local chapters of the **Consumers Association of Bangladesh** received training on their new roles under pending reforms to national legislation.

A session on **consumer credit and indebtedness** at CI's Asian Conference on Consumer Protection, Competition Policy and Law led to research conducted over the year in **India, Hong Kong, Japan** and **Malaysia** and presented at the first Asian Conference on the Regulation of Consumer Credit (in early 2004).

The **Asia-Pacific Consumer Law website** provides online access to legislation and case updates from 21 countries. See: www.ciroap.org/apcl/

12-Year Battle to Recover Funds

Brazil's IDEC won a 12-year court case to recover funds "borrowed" by the government between 1986 and 1988 through a "refundable" tax on vehicles and foods that was never returned. The legal battle, waged on behalf of 11 IDEC members, was monetarily small but of great symbolic importance.

Health

Consumer advocacy in the health arena now encompasses trade and intellectual property regimes, in addition to traditional concerns of access to quality health care, patients' rights and the marketing abuses of food, tobacco and pharmaceutical companies.

Access to Medicines and TRIPS

Millions of people worldwide lack access to medicines for life-threatening diseases, including HIV/AIDS, due in part to global trade rules. Examples of national action by CI members against restrictive intellectual property regimes and patents include legal battles, like those carried out in **Brazil, South Africa** and **Thailand**, to guarantee the right of countries to produce and import generic drugs under current **Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)** agreements.

At the **5th WTO Ministerial meeting** in Cancún, CI called upon governments to interpret TRIPS agreements in the spirit of the 2001 Doha Development Declaration, which recognised the primacy of public health through **compulsory licensing and parallel import measures**. The WTO's failure to uphold this commitment was analysed by CI in an international conference on **Social Costs of Drug Pricing and Patents in Developing Countries** and other forums worldwide.

Global Treaty for Tobacco Control

Three years of negotiations at the World Health Organization, and decades of grassroots activism, saw the adoption of the **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control** in May 2003. Hailed as the first global treaty on public health and corporate accountability, it bans advertising and tobacco promotion and gives governments the right to prioritise health over commercial interests, and to block tobacco industry interference. The FCTC will become international law following ratification by 40 countries.

CI members across Africa and Asia, including groups from **India, Malaysia, Malawi, South Africa** and **Zambia**, played a high-profile role in two international coalitions – the Network on Accountability for Tobacco Transnationals (NATT) and the Framework Convention Alliance – by lobbying to protect strong treaty provisions during negotiations.

WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health

CI is active in NGO consultations for a **WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health** to limit non-communicable diseases caused by diet and lifestyle, sending a 30-member delegation of CI groups and partner networks to the 56th World Health Assembly in Geneva.

CI delivered statements on child and adolescent health, access to essential medicines in developing countries, intellectual property rights in pharmaceuticals and strengthening public health systems. CI will continue to advocate for the adoption of an effective WHO Global Strategy in 2004.

A Briefing for Bush

Research by the **Uganda Consumer Protection Association** found that a four-fold drop in the price of HIV/AIDS medicines following the introduction of generic drugs brought a 900 percent increase in the number of people with access to treatment. The Ministry of Trade presented these findings to US President George W Bush during his 2003 visit.

Patents to the People

In **Thailand**, the **Foundation For Consumers** and its partners won a victory against US pharmaceutical giant Bristol Myers Squibb when BMS dropped a long-running patent battle over an HIV/AIDS drug, allowing the Thai government to begin production at a fraction of the cost. "This case can be an example for consumer organisations in other parts of the world," says Saree Ongsomwang, Foundation director. "If people cannot access pharmaceutical products, they can use their rights to basic needs as a consumer."

Utilities

Access to basic household services (water, sanitation, energy and telecommunications) is essential to the satisfaction of basic needs. Consumers seek universal access, affordability, sustainable use and a role in the regulatory process.

The CI Council identified water as a **major campaign priority** and began drafting a general policy on water. A set of **10 consumer principles** developed in 2003 provides a basic framework to measure impact on consumers.

CI's contribution to the **Global Water Scoping Process** – an international working group of public and private providers, labour organisations, government bodies and NGOs set up to assess the impact of private participation in water supply – has helped keep the concerns of the poorest consumers on the agenda.

Participation by CI on the **ISO Technical Committee 224 on Water and Sewerage** is based on priorities set in consultation with CI members to include standards for the non-connected systems that supply water to millions of people in developing countries.

In **Africa**, CI completed a project to assess water sector reforms in **Chad, Kenya, Senegal** and **Zambia**, with national stakeholder meetings held to discuss developing Plans of Action and increase consumer involvement. An overview of this project was presented to the **World Bank** during World Water Week in early 2004.

In **Latin America**, CI's regional office and members from a dozen countries created **RedVida**, a coalition to guarantee access to water. Many members are highly critical of the multinational companies entering national water markets, as is the

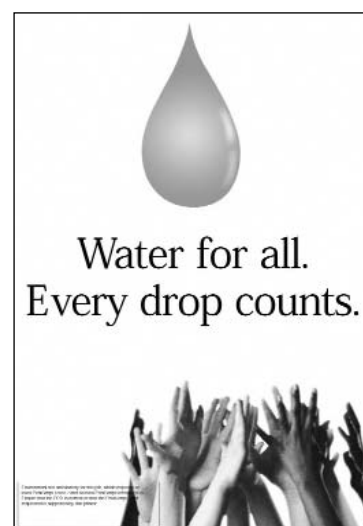
case in Argentina, where **UUC** and **Consumidores Argentinos** are active in efforts to have major concessions terminated.

Comparative research on legislation and regulatory frameworks conducted by the **Euro-Latin American Consumer Dialogue** revealed the extent to which national consumer protection legislation ignores public utilities, identifying the need for a model law or guidelines. The 2003 update of **CI's Model Law for Consumer Protection in Latin America** includes a provision on public utilities. **Guatemala's** new law, adopted in 2003, incorporates public utilities.

African consumers are increasingly recognised as a key stakeholder in the utility regulatory process and CI was invited to become an observer of the **African Forum for Utility Regulation**.

In **Mali**, consultations with consumers by regulatory agencies and service providers in the electricity and water sectors began in 2003, following **ASCOMA's** success in lobbying the government to postpone tariff hikes until 2005. The government also agreed to implement new regulations on service provision and redress, including compensation.

In **Eastern Europe** and the countries of the **former Soviet Union**, a survey by CI members looked at problems with district heating systems, including the widespread practice of collective cut-offs.



Campaigning for access in Asia

Telecoms under Scrutiny

Lobbying and research by **Kenya's Consumer Information Network** on the impact of a proposed Telkom monopoly concession on fixed telephone lines persuaded the government to revise its telecommunications strategy and open up the sector to competition. In **Peru**, **ASPEC** led a campaign that convinced the government not to extend the Telefónica concession, based on widespread dissatisfaction with its service.

Sustainable Consumption

CI takes the global lead in promoting sustainable consumption recommendations in the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection, recognising that meeting the needs of tomorrow's consumers depends on shifts to more sustainable consumption and production patterns today.

CI placed sustainable consumption and the role of consumer organisations high on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in November 2002, when governments agreed to develop a **10-year framework of programmes** on sustainable consumption.

In 2003, two follow-up global meetings and two regional meetings, all attended by CI, culminated in the **Declaration of Marrakech**, which explicitly acknowledges CI's advocacy role in promoting implementation of **Section G (Promotion of Sustainable Consumption)** of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection. The Guidelines deal with provision of practical information, conducting consumer research, testing products, promoting recycling, encouraging "life cycle" thinking and eco-products, strengthening regulatory mechanisms and adopting economic measures.

CI participates in the **UN Environment Programme Task Force** on the 10-year framework of programmes, which held its first meeting in 2003, and was invited to make presentations on the consumer role in sustainable consumption at international workshops in China and Japan aimed at launching national action plans.

Ways to **mobilise consumers** and address sustainability through the entire consumption chain – from producers to consumers – were presented by CI to the Asia Pacific Expert Meeting on Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, held in Indonesia.

"Meeting the needs of present and future generations for goods and services in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable."

–UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection

Research has begun on product testing, sustainable government procurement, consumer research and information campaigns in six **European countries** under a new CI project which will also help to **build capacity in Asia**. Training and consultations will produce a set of regional guidelines and implementation plans for Section G of the UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection in 12 Asian countries.

In **Latin America**, CI's regional office coordinates activities by members in **Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico** and **Peru** to create awareness around ozone depletion, climate change and biodiversity in an **Environmental Citizenship Programme** conducted with municipalities, churches, legislators, educators and the media. See: www.rolac.vnep.mx/cuidadania/index.htm

A workshop organised by CI explored **consumer education for sustainable consumption** at the 3rd International Seminar on Clean Production, in Argentina.

Green Prize



Its 20-year history of environmental activism has earned **Korea's CACPK**, a CI Council member, the 2003 International Environment Award made by Chosen and Mainichi, leading daily papers from Korea and Japan.

Technical Standards

CI's top concern is the lack of input into the standards process by consumers and by developing countries.

The largely unseen and unregulated international trade in second-hand goods poses benefits and dangers for consumers. CI and its members presented ISO with research detailing the problems and developed a proposal for **international standards** for commonly-traded **second-hand items** (such as tyres, cars, clothes, shoes and domestic electrical goods). CI believes these standards will benefit consumers by bringing better quality products to local markets. The proposal was approved at the **ISO Consumer Policy Committee** (COPOLCO) 2003 annual meeting and goes before the ISO General Council in 2004.

A new initiative to formalise input by consumers into ISO was advanced in an October meeting to discuss ISO's strategic agenda for the future. At present, CI attends COPOLCO meetings, working groups and the Chairman's Advisory Group. The COPOLCO 25th meeting, held in Thailand, included a training day for Asian consumer organisations.

CI sends **experts to selected meetings** of ISO, IEC (electrical) and ITU (telecommunications) standards-setting bodies. In 2003, CI participated in ISO meetings dealing with: **mechanical contra-**

ception (condoms and IUDs); **water and sewerage services** (access and cost recovery), **complaints handling, alternative dispute resolution** and **codes of conduct**; and committees dealing with the **safety of cars, toys and household electrical products**.

A new **Memorandum of Understanding** between CI and **ANEC** (European Association for the Coordination of Consumer Representation in Standardisation) will improve consumer representation at the international level.

"COPOLCO appreciates the valuable contribution that CI has made in facilitating the participation of consumer representatives to our training events. ISO participation in CI's World Congress also demonstrates the closer liaison between ISO and CI."

–Caroline Warne, Chairman, COPOLCO

Corporate Social Responsibility

Promoting corporate social responsibility is a vital part of CI's core work.

In a new development, CI participated in a strategic advisory group on the feasibility of developing an ISO standard for corporate social responsibility – work which will continue in 2004.

CI is a founding partner in the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), a multi-stakeholder process and independent institution whose mission is to promote globally-applicable Sustainability Reporting Guidelines. CI has provided input on how reporting should best be advanced in relation to consumers' needs.

In **Latin America**, the regional office participated in an Inter American Development Bank conference on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and presented the work of the **Red Puentes** network of citizens' groups from Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Chile, where **ODECU** is monitoring the activities of multinational companies. In **Brazil**, **IDEC** launched a CSR programme with **Consumentenbond** (Netherlands) to **track double standards** of conduct by multinational enterprises.

"At CA, we recognise that many decisions affecting consumers are made at the European and global level, and that's why we think it's important to work closely together with the European Consumers' Organisation (BEUC) and CI. We are most engaged in the areas of competition and trade, food and standards – all fields in which we know that we can achieve more collectively than we can on our own."

*– Kim Lavelly
Consumers' Association, UK*



Empowerment for a Global Consumer Movement

Institutional Development and Capacity Building

Linking institutional support to community action is one way that CI helps its members to build sustainable organisations.

Income Generation

The **Africa** office provided seed grants to members through projects connecting capacity-building in global trade and food campaigns to **income-generation**. A grant to **CAMA** supported research on trade for the government of **Malawi**. Other grants helped the creation of consumer food coops in **Senegal (ASDEC)** and cooperative buying clubs in **Zimbabwe (CCZ)**.

Creating Skills

A six-month capacity-building programme in **Moldava** (until recently, the last European country without a consumer NGO), helped **Pro-Consumerator** train its staff. Kenya's **Consumer Information Network** received support to develop a three-year strategic management plan. CI members from Europe and Africa participated in **communications training workshops**.

Creating Alliances

CI helps its members establish ties with academia and research institutes, as in **Vietnam** and **Panama**. It also promotes links among members groups. In 2003, CI's Latin America office created the **Foro de Consumidores del Mercosur** with 13 members from Southern Common Market countries, and the Asia-Pacific office helped **Indian** members **FEDCOT** and **CAG** combine grassroots and research skills for more effective lobbying on food issues.



CI's new members in 2003 include pioneers and veterans.

- **PRO Teste, Brazil:** Created in 2001, the **Associação Brasileira de Defesa do Consumidor** has 85,000 members and a magazine that covers the full consumer agenda.
- **Option Consommateurs, Canada:** **OC** was established in 1983 in Montreal. With a professional staff of 20, its publications include a quarterly magazine and research reports on banking, food and insurance sectors. **OC** is represented on some 20 government committees.
- **Society for Consumer Protection in Croatia:** Known by its acronym, **POTROSAC** was founded in 2000 and has 3,000 members in six regional branches. It gives legal advice, conducts research on public utilities and sits on government working groups for agricultural and economic policy. Its staff of four is complemented by volunteers.
- **Active Consumers, Denmark:** This small campaigning group focuses on food and sustainability issues.
- **Consumers Lebanon:** Established in 2000, **CL** is the country's only consumer NGO. Its volunteer staff, mostly from a medical background, work directly with health problems related to food safety and pollution. Its priority is adoption of national consumer protection legislation and norms on food safety, environment and public utilities.
- **INKA, Greece:** The **General Consumers Federation of Greece** is a 46-member national network founded in 1970 during the military dictatorship. **INKA** runs the Greek branch of the EU consumer advice network, and its president sits on the consumer committee of the European Commission.
- **Consumers Association of Singapore:** Established in 1971, **CASE** has a staff of 20, backed by a team of 200 volunteers. Its priorities are consumer information and promotion of fair business practices.

Consumer Education

Empowerment through education is a powerful means of helping individuals win respect for consumer rights on a daily basis and for future generations.

New Approaches: Innovative distance-learning courses on biotechnology and GM foods were delivered over the Internet to CI members in **Central America**. CI's Asia-Pacific office launched its **new Consumer Education website**, with a comprehensive collection of materials, interactive programmes and a directory of CI staff, members and others working in this area.



www.ciroap.org/ce/

Traditional Ways: In Thailand's Buddhist society, it is a common practice for people to seek merit through acts of kindness. But modern Thai consumer society has narrowed interpretation of this traditional practice to giving money to monks. The **Foundation for Consumers** held a "Smart Buddhists" campaign with religious leaders to promote alternatives, such as volunteering for charity, and adopting a **simple lifestyle** and vegetarian diet.



Thailand

New texts for adults: The **National Consumer League of Kazakhstan** published a new handbook for **university students** and methodological guide for professors, which it first presented at a national seminar and then shared with colleagues at a three-day seminar in **Kyrgistan**.

And for children: "We're consumers, too!" is the title of a picture book for pre-schoolers from the **Consumers Organisation of Macedonia**. A brochure for older children was also produced within CI's Community Fund project.

Other consumer education projects developed under the Community Fund looked at labelling (**Romania** and **Ukraine**), food surveys (**Lithuania**) and fairs. The "consumer evaluation card" created by the **Federation of Consumers in Bulgaria** and used at the Bulgarian Beer Fest and other trade fairs received considerable media attention.

Consumer education networks took the podium at CI's World Congress to exchange the experiences of practitioners across regions. CI is on the steering group of the new **European Consumer Citizenship Network** and delivered the keynote speech at its opening conference.



Ecuador

Adding Gender

A new training manual produced by CI's Latin America office to encourage consumer groups to think about gender is making its mark among women's groups. One result is a new alliance in **Chile**, where **ODECU** participates in roundtable discussions on issues such as sexism in advertising and the links between women's and consumer rights.

UNESCO Associated Schools: More than 3,500 students and their families benefited from teacher training conducted in three **Argentine** cities, in the most recent activity of CI's long-standing cooperation agreement with UNESCO associated schools in **Ecuador, Chile, El Salvador, Uruguay** and **Peru**.

Information and Advice: The **All-Nigerian Consumer Movement Union** opened a Consumer Information and Complaints Centre in Lagos state to help consumers demand quality goods at fair prices and to file complaints against abuses by financial, legal, medical and insurance services.



Romania

Communications

Through websites, member list-serves and a broad range of thematic bulletins and published research, CI fosters participation among its groups and informs its stakeholders and the general public.

CI's **website** has grown in scope and popularity. During 2003, new areas were created on competition, food safety and consumer education. Daily reports posted from the WTO Ministerial and the CI World Congress raised the number of visits to an average of 27,000 monthly.

Media releases, briefing publications and findings of **CI research projects** and **advocacy campaigns** are available in electronic form (as PDFs or Word documents) free of charge from the CI website. Over 1,000 items and 70 publications were posted to the main site during 2003. An additional 500 documents appear on the Latin America regional office Spanish-language site. CI offices released more than 70 media releases over the year.

CI list-serves are a main channel for input, consultation and coordination among members. Joining the trade, food and standards lists this year were forums on global governance and sustainable food production and consumption.

Thematic **electronic bulletins** on food, trade, consumer education and legal issues are circulated by CI offices to members, partners and media.



Consumers International global website
www.consumersinternational.org

CI Oficina para América Latina y el Caribe
(mostly Spanish language)
www.consumidoresint.cl

Asia Pacific Consumer Education
www.ciroap.org/ce/

Asia Pacific Consumer Law
www.ciroap.org/apcl/

Competition: More for Everyone
www.ciudadanosaldia.com/ci/



CI's four **regional newsletters** keep members informed of events in their own area and of CI activities around the world (*Contact the regional office for subscription information.*)

Consumer 21

Quarterly newsletter from the Office for Developed and Transition Economies.

English, French, Russian. Electronic format only.



Consumidores y Desarrollo

Quarterly newsletter from the Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Spanish. Print and electronic formats.



African Consumer /Le Consommateur Africain

Quarterly newsletter from the Office for Africa.

English and French. Print and electronic formats.



Asia Pacific Consumer

Quarterly newsletter from the Office for Asia and the Pacific.

English. Print and electronic formats.

Publications

The publications listed below were released in 2003. All are available for free in electronic formats (from the CI website) and print format (from the indicated regional office), except as noted.

BUILDING THE CONSUMER MOVEMENT

Consumers International
17th World Congress

Outcomes Report and Statement

October 2003. English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. Head Office.

TRADE AND ECONOMICS

Consumer Charter for Trade: Consumers International's Recommendations for Cancún and the Future of the Doha Development Agenda

CI's positions on the Agreement on Agriculture, TRIPS, GATS, competition and the implementation of development issues at the 5th WTO Ministerial meeting in Cancún. September 2003. English, Spanish, French. Head Office.

Globalization for All: Reviving the Spirit of Bretton Woods

This document examines recent developments in global financial markets in light of the original aims of the Bretton Woods institutions. Written by Ian McAuley. April 2003. English. Head Office.

Cultivating a Crisis: The Global Impact of the Common Agricultural Policy

This report, commissioned by CI and European Research into Consumer Affairs (ERICA), provides detailed evidence to show that European Union consumers will pay a high price for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with EU expansion, and calls for reforms. Written by John Marsh and Secondo Tarditi. April 2003. English. Head Office.

Impact Assessment of the Agreement on Agriculture and the General Agreement on Trade in Services on Consumers in Africa.

The report looks at the impact on consumers of liberalisation regimes in agriculture and services in Chad, Ghana, Mali, Kenya and Zambia. July 2003. English and French. Africa Office.

Are Standards Justified or Hidden Protectionism? Some Cases of Food Standards

Opinion piece arguing that some standards for food products are set unnecessarily high and act as trade barriers to developing country exports. Written by Nessie Golakai and Amadou Kanouté. English. Africa Office.

Is Growing Bt Cotton an Answer to Cotton Dumping?

Sept. 2003. English. Africa Office.

COMPETITION POLICY

The Consumer Guide to Competition: A Practical Handbook

This guide explains the issues involved in analysing markets and competitive behaviour and how competition works within markets and for consumers. Written by Phil Evans. March 2003. English. Head Office.

Consumer Policy and Multilateral Competition Frameworks: A Discussion Paper

Consumers, Multilateral Competition Policy and the WTO: Technical Report

Multilateral Competition Agreements and the WTO: Peer Review Report
March 2003. English. Head Office.

FOOD SAFETY AND SECURITY

Genetically Modified Crops: A Resource Guide for Asia Pacific

This resource guide explains the science behind genetic modification and its current applications, its implications and the frameworks necessary for its safe use. Written by Suman Sahai. English. Asia-Pacific Office.

TRIPS, Farmers' Rights and Food Security: The Issues at Stake

Provides background information to support "No Patents on Life Forms" campaign of CI's Asia-Pacific office. Written by Rajeswari Kanniah. English. Asia-Pacific Office.

Corporate Control of the Food Chain: The GM Link

Campaign and information kit prepared for World Consumer Rights Day 2003. March 2003. English, French, Spanish.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Consumer Protection and Quality of Life in Africa: Report 2002

Annual index to assess effectiveness of national consumer protection legislation through evaluation of satisfaction of basic needs. March 2003. English and French. Africa Office.

CONSUMER EDUCATION

Género y consumo: Hacia un enfoque de género en la educación para el consumo

June 2003. Spanish. (English forthcoming). Latin America Office.

A complete listing of all CI publications can be found in the Publications Catalogue posted on the CI website.



International Support

Coopération internationale

Cooperación internacional

International Support

Coopération internationale Cooperación internacional

Consumers International would like to thank the following organisations for their financial support for work during 2003.

Consumers International tient à remercier les organisations suivantes pour leur soutien financier au travail réalisé en 2003.

Consumers International agradece a las siguientes organizaciones por el apoyo financiero a su trabajo durante 2003.

African Capacity Building Foundation

Anne Fransen Fund, Consumentenbond, Netherlands

Church Development Service (EED), Germany

Community Fund, UK

Department for International Development (DFID), UK

European Commission

Ford Foundation, USA

Government of Cantabria, Spain

Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries (HIVOS), Netherlands

International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

Japan Foundation

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation (DGIS), Netherlands

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

NOVIB (Oxfam Netherlands)

Rockefeller Foundation, USA

UK Charity Know-How

United Nations Environment Programme

World Bank

World Health Organization

Summary of Consolidated Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2003

CORE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(US\$ 000s)

INCOME	2003	2002
Membership fees		
Full Members	1,754	1,586
Affiliate Members	57	62
Government Affiliate Members	42	65
	1,853	1,713
Other Income	41	72
Overhead contributions from project income	108	89
Transfer from core to project funds	(76)	
Total Core Income	1,926	1,874
EXPENDITURE		
Salaries, consultancy and social security	1,192	1,112
Office and administration	409	453
Publications	70	69
Travel and meetings	142	140
Exchange rate loss/(gain)	1	6
Global governance/special projects *	94	110
	1,908	1,890
World Congress funds	16	30
Total Core Expenditure	1,924	1,920
Retained surplus for the year	2	(46)
Balance brought forward from previous year	391	460
Exchange rate (loss)/gain	10	(23)
Revalued balance brought forward	401	437
Balance Carried Forward	403	391

* Excludes President's expenses generously donated by the Australian Consumers' Association

Figures for 2003 are based on unaudited accounts.

PROJECT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(US\$ 000s)

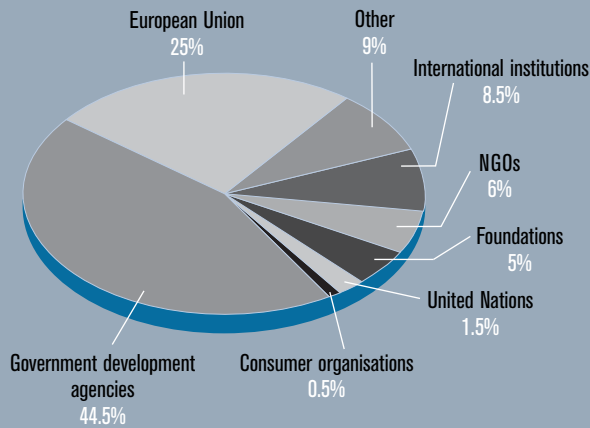
	2003	2002
Balance brought forward from previous year	253	662
Exchange (loss)/gain	6	(23)
Revalued balance brought forward	259	639
Grant income received:	3,811	2,808
Transfers from core and designated funds	92	30
Overhead contributions	(108)	(89)
Total Project Resources	4,054	3,388
Direct project expenditure	3,412	3,135
Exchange rate loss/(gain)	3	
Total Project Expenditure	3,415	3,135
Balance of Project Funds at year end	639	253

BALANCE SHEET AS OF 31/12/2003

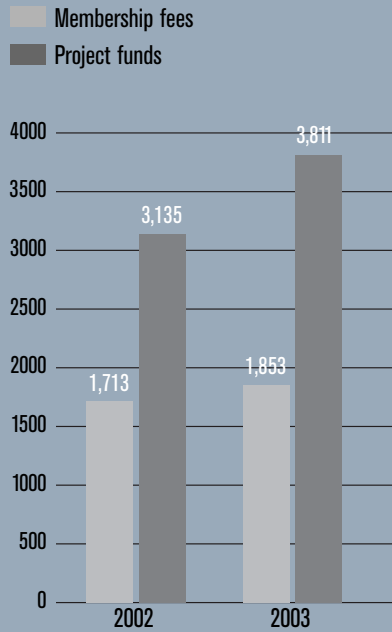
(US\$ 000s)

	2003	2002
Fixed assets	263	254
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors and prepayments	709	685
Cash at bank and in hand	1,150	362
	1,859	1,047
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors and accruals	1,080	658
Net current assets	779	389
NET TOTAL ASSETS		
Represented by		
General reserves	403	391
Unexpended project funds	639	253
TOTAL FUNDS	1,042	644

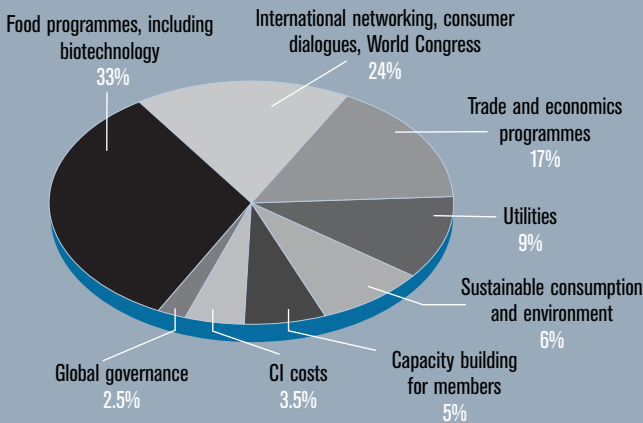
INCOME RECEIVED BY TYPES OF DONORS 2003



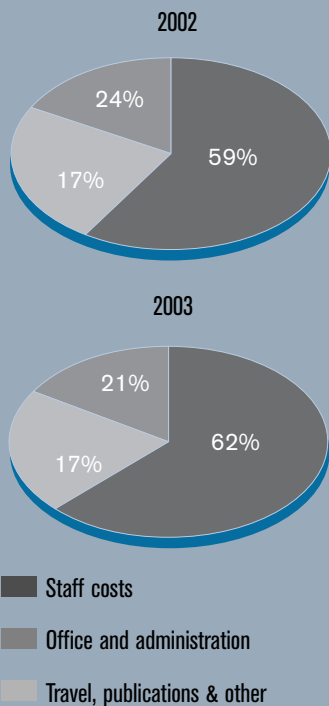
INCOME FROM MEMBERS AND PROJECT FUNDS (US\$ 000s)



PROJECT FUNDS SPENT IN 2003

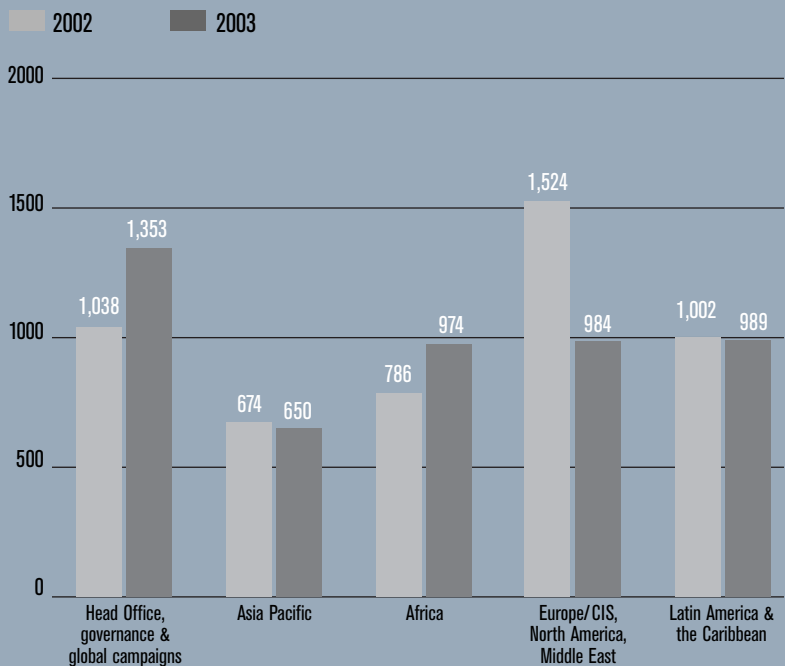


USE OF CORE FUNDS



SPENDING BY REGION

Total spending by office, including core funds and project funds (US\$ 000s)*



*excludes global funds for World Congress

Consumers International

Founded in 1960, Consumers International is a federation of consumer organisations dedicated to the protection and promotion of consumers' interests worldwide through institution-building, education, research and lobbying of international decision-making bodies. An independent foundation, Consumers International currently has some 250 members in over 115 countries.

Crée en 1960, Consumers International est une fédération d'organisations de consommateurs se consacrant à la protection et à la promotion des intérêts des consommateurs à travers le monde par le développement d'institutions, l'éducation, la recherche et le lobby auprès des organismes internationaux. Fondation indépendante, Consumers International appuie et regroupe les activités de plus de 250 organisations membres dans presque 115 pays.

Fundada en 1960, Consumers International es una federación de organizaciones de consumidores dedicada a la protección y la promoción de los intereses de los consumidores en todo el mundo a través de la creación de instituciones, la educación, la investigación y la representación ante los organismos internacionales. Consumers International es una fundación independiente que cuenta con unos 250 miembros en más de 115 países.

