



Consumer Justice Now!

World Consumer Rights Day 2013

A guide to member action

World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) 2013 will take place on **15 March**.

This year's theme is '**Consumer Justice Now!**', and will highlight **the importance of consumer protection** in building a safer, fairer world.

This guide aims to **arm national consumer rights groups with the tools they need** to plan their activities on the big day.

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What is World Consumer Rights Day?

WCRD is **celebrated by consumer organisations** all over the world every year on **15 March**.

It sees the global consumer movement unite for a **day of action** around a **common campaign theme**.

It is truly global. In the last **25 years** WCRD has gone from strength to strength, and grown into a international phenomenon with **more than 80 CI members in more than 60 countries** taking part each year.

Find out more about previous WCRD celebrations at <http://consint.info/work-wcrd13>



Why ‘Consumer Justice Now!’?

Last year, the UN Commission on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) announced that the **UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection will be revised**. This process will be completed in 2014, making 2013 the key year to influence the process.

This year we have a unique opportunity to **raise the profile of consumer protection** and the role it plays in **building a safer, fairer world**.



WCRD 2013 has three key aims:

- **Highlight the importance of consumer protection** through innovative actions around the world.
- Press for the **implementation of the existing UN guidelines** in sectors and countries where it is weak.
- Campaign to **strengthen the UN guidelines** and update them for the 21st Century.

Revision of the UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection

The development of the UN Guidelines in 1985 was a **key victory for the consumer movement**. The guidelines have served consumers well, but **improvements can be made** and adjustments are needed to reflect a changing world.

Some of the proposals we are making are:

- To include **access to essential goods and services** as one of the legitimate needs of consumers;
- **Stronger recognition for consumer organisations** and the role they can play in policy formulation, redress and dispute resolution and testing products and services;
- A new section on **e-commerce and digital products**;
- To include **responsible marketing** of products like food, alcohol and tobacco.;
- To **add financial services as a specific sector**; and
- The **UN to recognise WCRD** as the international day for consumer protection.

Find out more at <http://consint.info/ClandUNGCP>

International initiatives

The 'state of consumer protection around the world'

In late 2012, we launched a major new survey to 'map the state of consumer protection around the world'. This represents an exciting first for CI.

How is the right to basic needs recognised in different countries?

How do countries ensure the safety of consumers?

How do governments support consumer organisations?

How many countries have a Consumer Protection Act?

How are countries protecting consumers in the digital age?

What's the state of financial consumer protection around the world?

The results of this research will provide a **truly international picture** and serve as an **important resource for WCRD and beyond**.

CI members will be able compare consumer protection in their country with the situation in other countries around the world. It will **highlight where progress has been made as well as where more work is needed**.

The results of this research will be sent to all members one week before WCRD.

Mapping WCRD 2013

One of the best aspects of WCRD is the **rich variety of activities** that take place around the world. Last year we presented these on a map for the first time and given how popular this was we want to do it again!

The WCRD 2013 map will showcase all actions that members undertake on 15 March – so please **tell us about your plans as soon as possible**.

This will demonstrate that consumer protection is an **important global issue**. It will also **inspire and encourage other CI members**.

Send us a brief summary of your plans on WCRD by email, Facebook or Twitter and we will include it on the map. You can also upload your activity directly using the online form:

<https://wcrd2013.crowdmap.com/>

The screenshot shows the 'wcrd2013.crowdmap.com' website. At the top is a navigation bar with links: HOME, REPORTS, SUBMIT A REPORT, GET ALERTS, and CONTACT US. Below this is a green banner with the text: 'CI marks World Consumer Rights Day by showing where and why people need consumer justice now.' The main content area features a world map with several red dots indicating locations. To the left of the map are filters for ALL, NEWS, PICTURES, and VIDEO. To the right is a 'FULL SCREEN MAP' button and a 'CATEGORY FILTER [HIDE]' section. The category filter includes: ALL CATEGORIES (red square), CONSUMER PROTECTION ISSUES (pink square), and TRUSTED REPORTS (green square). Below the category filter is a 'How to Report' section with three options: 'By using an app: iPhone, Android', 'By sending an email: wiyer@consint.org', and 'By sending a tweet with the hashtag: #wcrd2013'. At the bottom of the 'How to Report' section are social media icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Email, and a plus sign, followed by a counter showing '0'. The map itself shows a scale of 1:111M and a date range from Sep 2012 to Jan 2013.

Illustrating the importance of consumer protection

We also want to create an accessible and graphic illustration of why consumer protection is so important.

That's why we are asking all CI members to send us photographs that illustrate the need for better consumer protection. We hope to build a collection of **powerful images to really strengthen our message** on WCRD.

Cigarette advertising (Russia)



A bottle of soda sold with a battery in the bottom (Kenya)



Coca-Cola marketing to school children (India)

A family home for sale after a dramatic interest rate rise means the owners can no longer afford the payments (USA)



Struggling to understand an electricity bill.

You may have other examples, for instance, poor food safety, high food prices or companies violating consumer privacy online. All your photographs will be **displayed on the WCRD 2013 map** and **shared through social media**.

Send us your examples by e-mail, Facebook, Twitter or upload them directly to the global map.

How to mark the day in your country

Choose your issue

We suggest you **choose a topical and nationally relevant consumer protection issue** to introduce the wider importance of consumer protection and the UN Guidelines.

You will be best placed to know what this issue is – it could be related to food safety, an issue connected to e-commerce or the misselling of financial services.

Whatever issue you choose consider doing **a new piece of research** to release on WCRD. It might be a full survey involving **lengthy research** or you may just want to collect some examples or case studies to illustrate your point.

It can be a good idea to **involve individual consumers** in your activity. You could **include focus group discussions** in a research project, or interview consumers to support your message with **personal stories**.

Make some noise!

CI members have a **great tradition of organising successful events** for WCRD. This has included **marches, public meetings, conferences, information stalls and many more**.

You will know best what works in your country – but do look at what other members have done and see if it sparks some new ideas. Check the latest additions to the WCRD 2013 map and find out about events held in previous years at <http://www.consumersinternational.org/our-work/wcrd>



Communicate your message

A major aim of WCRD is to raise the profile of consumer protection. As you plan your communications think about how to **exploit all the available options**.

Traditional media are still a major force and crucial to getting your message across. Consider contributing **newspaper comment pieces** and appearing on **radio and TV shows**. Organising a **press conference** does not require many resources and can be very effective if planned and executed well.

Go global! **Social media** is another powerful tool to **connect with both the public and advocacy targets**, as well as journalists. Each year we are seeing more and more activity on Facebook and Twitter around WCRD. Share your stories with CI, CI members and people around the world.

City & Business
Comment
Get tough on junk food
S... Saturday 10 March is World Consumer Rights Day — and this year's theme is Junk Food Excess. It will promote a global consumer campaign and the marketing of junk food to children.

Promote Consumer Financial Protection
Governments Told
Consumer International has urged governments to take action to protect consumers from financial abuse.

Gov't Seeks \$1.8bn China Loan Approval
By Anna M...
The Chinese government is seeking approval for a \$1.8 billion loan from the World Bank to fund infrastructure projects in China.

Young and financially illiterate
By Sonia Ramchandran
KUALA LUMPUR, Half of those who declared bankruptcy because of credit card debt were under the age of 40. Many Malaysians have done twice the amount of credit cards. More than 10,000 Malaysians were declared bankrupt between 2005 and 2010.

CAUSES OF BANKRUPTCY BETWEEN 2005 AND 2010

Category	Percentage
Credit cards	5.5%
Housing loans	7.49%
Business loans	10.93%
Personal loans	11.78%
Others	40.18%

twitter #WCRD2013

twitter #consumerjusticenow

Contacting decision makers

The overall aim of WCRD is to **influence decision makers**.

CI will send you a pro forma letter to **write to the head of your consumer protection department or agency**.

- Highlight the revision of the UN Guidelines
- Ask for his/her **support for CI proposals**
- Request a **meeting to discuss further**

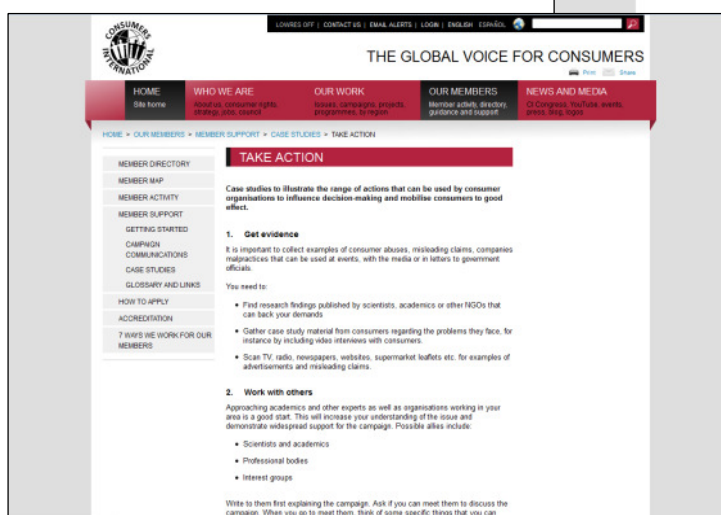
Also think about other routes to influence decision makers.

- Speeches by legislators, government ministers, city mayors
- Questions in parliament/senate

Resources to help

To help you plan your activities CI has a lot of briefings and resources on our website.

These include 'how to' guides and checklists on doing research and surveys, building a media strategy, planning an event or writing a press release. <http://www.consumersinternational.org/our-members/member-support/campaign-communications>



So, to recap...

Key messages

Use your national example to introduce the importance of consumer protection:

- **Consumer protection is key to a fairer, safer future**
- **Progress has been made, but gaps in protection remain**
(see international examples from CI's survey on the state of consumer protection)

Your organisations is supporting CI in calling for:

- The **UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection to be updated**
(see CI's proposals)
- **WCRD to be recognised as an international day** for consumer protection

Key activities

- ✓ **Send us photos** of bad practices to illustrate importance of consumer protection
- ✓ **Choose a national focus** and plan activities and communications
- ✓ **Tell us** about your plans
- ✓ **Make some noise** on the day
- ✓ Use the CI letter and briefing to **contact your minister**

Good luck!